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LAST ISSUE

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-96-136
Monday
15 July 1996

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Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-96-136 *15 July 1996*

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Inter-American Affairs: Leaders Demand Drug-Link Proof

PA1307220896 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2048 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] San Jose, 13 Jul (ACAN-EFE) — The Central American and Chilean presidents have said that the U.S. revoking Colombian President Ernesto Samper's visa "does not favor understanding among nations." The seven governments signed a resolution today demanding that Colombia's democratic constitutionality be respected, following the congressional "acquittal" of Colombian President Ernesto Samper.

Washington believes that Samper knew he was using drug money to finance his presidential campaign.

"In view of the seriousness of the actions that served to justify such a decision, the U.S. Government must hand to the proper authorities the evidence on which it is basing its decision," the document dated 12 July noted. The presidents voiced "their concern and disagreement" with the measure and hope that Colombia and the United States will overcome differences through dialogue and understanding, "in keeping with the new spirit that should govern hemispheric relations." The Central American and Chilean presidents issued this communique after meeting in San Jose on 12 July to study a new commercial and political relationship. The document was signed by Eduardo Frei (Chile), Jose Maria Figueres (Costa Rica), Armando Calderon (El Salvador), Alvaro Arzu (Guatemala), Carlos Roberto Reina (Honduras), Julia Mena (vice president of Nicaragua), and Elodio Aragon (representative of Belizean Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel).

Frei and his Central American colleagues refused to comment on this issue during a joint news conference on 12 July, although the opinion that prevailed was that Washington should produce the evidence linking Samper to drug trafficking.

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Cuba

Cuba: Newspaper Rejects Group's Call for Hijacker's Asylum

PA1207175796 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1422 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 12 Jul (PL) — Today's GRANMA describes members of the National Cuban-American Foundation of Miami as troublemakers for asking the U.S. Government to grant "political asylum" to the hijacker of a Cuban airliner.

The newspaper adds that the anti-Cuban group's call proves once again that it wants to use air piracy to harass Cuba and describes the group's actions as "dangerous behavior."

The newspaper says that the foundation is backing the work of a terrorist, who forced the crew of a small Cuban airliner to land at Guantanamo Naval Base (a U.S. military enclave in this country) on 7 July.

The newspaper points out that this action violates International Civil Aviation Organization resolutions.

It also recalls that Havana and Washington signed a migration agreement in New York in September 1994, outlining specific measures to take to prevent Cubans who want to go to U.S. territory from using force and violence to commandeer aircraft and boats to do so.

A similar agreement signed in May 1995 states that "migrants who arrive at Guantanamo Naval Base illegally will also be returned to Cuba," a specific that GRANMA says the foundation has ignored.

The newspaper accuses the extreme right-wing group of advocating air piracy on more than one occasion, recalling the foundation's influence in getting Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada released after they bombed a Cubana de Aviacion flight in midair 20 years ago.

The newspaper highlights the foundation's links to Brothers to the Rescue, which is responsible for numerous "air provocations against the island and whose chief, Jose Basulto, the foundation again rewarded" by having his penalties reduced for having repeatedly transgressed Cuban jurisdictional limits.

The newspaper says that the foundation also encouraged flotillas of boats and airplanes to near the Havana coast.

GRANMA also condemns Republican Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart, who recently expressed his opinion (considered here as irresponsible) that denying the air pirate political asylum "would be seen as soft" by the Havana government.

Cuba: Foreign Minister on Hijacker's Asylum, Flotilla

PA1207195096 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 12 Jul 96

[From the "National Radio News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina has warned that Cuba will reject any conditions that the United States may set for returning a hijacker who recently redirected an airliner to Guantanamo Naval Base, as conditions for his return are already laid out in migration agreements that both the United States and Cuba have signed. Robaina said that in these cases there can be no room for saying if you do this, we will turn him over and if you don't, we will not turn him over; migration agreements and international laws would be violated and U.S. officials would be seen as dormant and conspiratory. As for threats from Miami that a new flotilla of ships and airplanes plan to set out on 13 July, the foreign minister said that Cuba will defend its sovereignty in any way it deems necessary and that the organizers of the spectacle and their supporters should be aware of that.

Cuba: Commentary Says Hijacker Should Be Tried or Returned

PA1207202596 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Commentary by Orlando Contreras from the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuban television a few days ago transmitted a program exclusively from a U.S. source that showed the extremes to which the so-called organization Brothers to the Rescue has repeatedly violated Cuban airspace, which it violated again on 24 February of this year. The images and texts were filmed and transmitted by a number of private and official U.S. channels. We must not forget that Television Marti, which is invisible in Cuba, is an official dependent of the administration, that it is paid for by U.S. taxpayers, and that the House of Representatives decided in Washington last night to cut off its $11 million budget because of its total worthlessness.

This television material, the source of which is not suspected of having any sympathy for Cuba, was turned over to members of the ICAO [International Civil Aviation Organization] and is available to members of the UN Security Council and the news media. The Cuban position is that all ICAO reports should be turned over to the UN Security Council and made public by the news media. Cuba has nothing to hide. The United States, which has failed in the ICAO Council meeting

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in Canada, is trying to gain time for the UN Security Council meeting, but meanwhile, incidents continue to occur as if they had escaped from Pandora's box.

A few days ago, a hijacker at gunpoint diverted a Cuban, civilian airplane with individuals on board, including two children, which also was transporting newspapers to Guantanamo, to the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay. U.S. State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said on 8 July: We condemn acts of air piracy wherever they occur in the world. Hijacking an airplane and risking the lives of innocent people are very serious matters.

If hijacking is condemned, as stipulated by U.S. laws, the hijacker should either be tried for hijacking, or the hijacker should be turned over to Cuban authorities, according to an agreement signed by the United States and Cuba in September 1994 and a migration agreement between the United States and Cuba in May 1995.

The same Miami mafia that has pressed for the Helms-Burton law is behind Brothers to the Rescue and the hijacker and is now exerting pressure on Clinton not to delay implementation of the internationally repudiated third chapter of the Helms-Burton law.

Washington is very involved in internal contradictions and an electoral battle, but Cuba has maintained only one position regarding all these incidents: the truth, strict compliance with Cuban and international laws, and an honest handling of the facts and documents.

Cuba: Ministry Questions U.S. House Decision on TV Marti

PA1307045696 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2208 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 12 Jul (PL) — The Cuban Foreign Ministry on 12 July expressed skepticism over the decision by the U.S. House of Representatives' Appropriations Committee, which canceled funding of television station "TV Marti," directed against the island.

In statements to PRENSA LATINA, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Miguel Alfonso said that a sanction of this level is only the first part of a lengthy legislative process, and that he would not yet jump to conclusions.

U.S. House sources said on 12 July that if the measure is implemented, it will deprive the station of the $11 million it requires to function.

Nevertheless, other Cuban observers have also expressed doubts that the station's total budget will be definitively suppressed when it is debated by the U.S. congressional plenum.

In the opinion of Democratic Representative David Skagg, those funds should be used to improve border policy "instead of wasting tax-payers' money to broadcast interferences and noises to Cuba," because Cuba has always blocked the station's signal.

The Appropriations Committee adopted the decision with 29 votes in favor and 13 against, although the employees of "TV Marti" have themselves admitted that in six years of broadcasts, few Cubans have been able to see their programs due to interferences applied by the Cuban authorities.

Cuba on several occasions has denounced the U.S. television and radio aggressions, saying that — the newspaper GRANMA underscored — it is not a debate about freedom of information but about the island's sovereignty.

Section 106 of the U.S. Helms-Burton law, which was approved in March and intensifies the blockade against Cuba, contemplates bolstering "TV Marti's" broadcasts with a change to an ultrahigh frequency.

Cuba: Revocation of Samper's Visa Called 'Arrogant' Act

PA1307021596 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0028 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 12 Jul (PL) — Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina on 12 July described as an arrogant and unjustifiable act the U.S. Government's decision to cancel the visa of Colombian President Ernesto Samper, whom it has accused of having ties with drug trafficking.

In statements to PRENSA LATINA, Robaina said that such disrespect for the Colombian Congress' decisions is a prelude to new interventionist steps by Washington against Bogota.

In Robaina's opinion, the U.S. decision denigrates the Colombian Government and people's resolve to confront drug trafficking, an impossible task to achieve without the true cooperation of the country that is the world's leading market for drugs.

Robaina added that with such an attitude, the United States is once again attempting to blame the developing countries for the inactivity of those who are mainly responsible for the excessive production and trafficking of drugs.

Cuba's protest is also based on the fact that it views this action against Colombia as an attack on the president of the Nonaligned Movement, a group of nations that defends the national sovereignty and self-determination

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of peoples, and which has always denounced interventionism.

Robaina said that the measure against Colombia proves that the interventionism, unilateral coercive measures, and aggressions were not only against Cuba due to alleged political differences, but because they are part of an authoritative and imperialistic way of thinking.

The head of Cuban diplomacy also explained that with offensive procedures such as the so-called "certification" or the adoption of criminal laws such as the internationally repudiated Helms-Burton law, the world is obtaining additional proof of the U.S. leaders' imperial arrogance.

Robaina also lashed out at Washington for making the violation of international law into a foreign policy practice, by judging other sovereign states, passing laws against them, and even claiming the right to mete out punishment.

Such conduct, the foreign minister added, deserves to be rejected and strongly confronted by those people that feel truly free and sovereign.

Robaina then wondered: what would happen if the world disqualified U.S. leaders and vetoed them for all the atrocities they have perpetrated against people?

Cuba: Robaina on Possible Violations of Air, Sea Space

PA1307133496 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1220 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Havana, 13 Jul (PL) — Cuba this week reiterated it is prepared to defend its sovereignty in view of possible violations from ultra-rightist elements from Florida and demanded that Washington return the hijacker of a civilian airplane.

Speaking to the national and foreign media on 11 July, Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina spoke of new threats from Miami of an incursion by ships and planes in Cuban air and sea limits announced for today.

Cuba will maintain its disposition to defend its sovereignty and our air and sea space in any form it may become necessary, something which organizers of the "show," and those who back them, should know, the minister said. Robaina then said this statement should not be interpreted as a Cuban threat. He said Cuba will have to wait to see whether this operation will take place in international waters, and if so, it would be of no interest to the island.

When asked about the person who detoured a Cuban passenger and cargo plane from its route, Robaina said his country will not accept any kind of condition for the return of the hijacker of the civil airplane by the United States, because this is part of the migration agreements.

Meanwhile, President Fidel Castro this week handed the flag to the national delegation that will participate in the Olympic games in Atlanta, the United States, in which the island expects to retain the fifth place, by nation, it achieved in Barcelona. [passage omitted]

Cuba: Military Forces Patrol Waters, Skies

PA1307173496 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1507 GMT 13 Jul 96

[By Alejandro Gomez]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Havana, 13 Jul (PL) — Cuba's military forces today patrolled the waters and skies of this country to prevent a violation by ultra-rightist elements of the Cuban community in Florida, the United States.

PRENSA LATINA has been able to establish that approximately 50 reporters, photographers, and cameramen, including about 20 from the foreign media accredited on the island, are on board two ships to directly witness how events develop.

For markedly propagandistic purposes, members of the counterrevolutionary group Democracy Movement, headquartered in Florida, have organized a flotilla and have threatened to carry out a new, illegal incursion of ships and planes in Cuban waters and skies.

Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina reiterated on 11 July that his country maintains the position of defending its sovereignty at whatever cost is necessary and, he said, the organizers of this show and those who back them must know this.

In any event, Robaina said, Cuba's air and sea limits will be, as always, confronting or not a flotilla, well protected.

Robaina said Cuba has chosen to denounce in time the possible provocations to see to what extent Washington is prepared to tolerate or not these actions.

Cuban Foreign Ministry Spokesman Miguel Alfonso has said "Cuba has no intention of provoking an incident, and we prefer to believe this position is also that of the United States."

In his weekly news conference on 11 July, Alfonso did not discard the possibility of cooperation between Cuban and U.S. Coast Guards, as it has happened on other occasions, to prevent incidents. [passage omitted]

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Cuba: Navy Commander Explains Mission, Notes U.S. Vessels

PA1307192796 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 13 Jul 96

[From the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The following is an interview by Orlando Contreras with the commander of the Cuban Revolutionary Navy vessel transporting a group of national and foreign reporters to the site of a new provocation against Cuba organized in the United States:

[Begin recording] [Contreras] We are in a Navy vessel. The commander of this vessel is here with me; he will identify himself.

[Toirac Rodriguez] I am the commander of Submarine Chaser 321, Frigate Lieutenant Jose Toirac Rodriguez.

[Contreras] What is your mission?

[Pereira Rodriguez] Our mission at this point along the coast is to transport national and foreign reporters so they may witness a possible violation by Cuban-North American citizens, something which has become frequent.

[Contreras] Where are we now?

[Toirac Rodriguez] Nine miles from El Morro Lighthouse.

[Contreras] From here, I can see two units that as far as I know are two warships. How far away are they?

[Toirac Rodriguez] Those are two U.S. Coast Guard units, one of which is a medium resistance Coast Guard vessel 13.5 miles away; the second one is a small resistance Coast Guard vessel 15 miles away. The first one is 1.5 miles away from our territorial waters.

[Contreras] Why are they there?

[Toirac Rodriguez] I believe they are there to prevent, along with our border guard troops service, the violation the Cuban-North American citizens intend to commit. [end recording]

Cuba: Cuba Will Not Use Force To Prevent Water Violations

PA1307182696 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1704 GMT 13 Jul 96

[By Alejandro Gomez: "Cuba Discards Use of Violence To Impede Violation of Sovereignty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuban Territorial Waters, 13 Jul (PL) — The commander of a Cuban submarine chaser affirmed today that Cuban border guard troops will not use force to prevent possible violations of its waters by counterrevolutionary elements from Miami.

The weapons of the military vessels nine miles off the Cuban coasts "are deactivated and in their cases," said Navy First Lieutenant Jose Toirac to about 50 local and foreign journalists participating in a journey to the limits of Cuban territorial waters.

Our objective, he said, is so the media may watch and witness the violations should they take place. Our mission, he said, is so reporters may witness an eventual, new violation of the country's borders by citizens of Cuban origin living in the United States.

Pressed by reporters about what would happen if ships were to enter Cuban waters, Toirac said no measure would be adopted.

As for possible contact with the U.S. Coast Guard, a vessel of which is located 13.5 miles from Havana's El Morro and which is visible from the submarine chaser from which this PRENSA LATINA correspondent is reporting, Toirac said the Cuban authorities are maintaining communication with those units.

"They (the U.S. Coast Guards) and Washington's authorities have assured they are disposed to avoid any violation of Cuban waters, he said. [no closing quotation mark as received]

Toirac confirmed that about 20 vessels organized by the so-called Democracy Movement sailed out of Florida early and headed for Cuban, jurisdictional water limits (12 miles off Havana) accompanied by two small Cessna planes.

According to Toirac, not all the vessels will reach their objective because of navigation problems that usually arise in the Straits of Florida.

Cuba: Cuba Charges U.S. Plane Entered Airspace 11 Jul

PA1307181296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1718 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 13 Jul (PL) — Cuba today charged that another U.S. plane has entered the information flight region [region de informacion de vuelo] of Havana without any previous coordination and has jeopardized the safety of three commercial planes from various countries.

Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, has sent a letter in this regard to Assad Kotaite, president of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), stating that this serious incident occurred on 11 July.

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This occurrence is the second of this type registered in recent days and this time affected the normal flights of commercial planes from Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the United States itself.

Cuba: ICAO, FAA Notified on Danger of U.S. Flights

PA1307214196 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1817 GMT 13 Jul 96

[By Javier Rodriguez; all figures, names, and titles as received]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 13 Jul (PL) — Cuba today blamed the U.S. Government for allowing an airplane to enter Havana's air corridor unannounced, putting three civilian airplanes from various countries at risk.

Ricardo Alarcon, president of the Cuban parliament, has written Assad Kotaite, president of the International Civil Aviation Organization [ICAO], on the events of 11 July.

Division General Rogelio Acevedo, president of the Civil Aeronautics Institute, has sent a similar note to the FAA Administrator. Alarcon states in his letter that at 0924 on 11 July, Cuban radar detected an unidentified vessel operating in Havana's air corridor.

Cuban Air Traffic Control contacted Miami for identification of the aircraft; Miami admitted at 0959 that this was "a U.S. Government airplane on assignment in the zone under code Transpondedor 5400." [la zona con codigo transpondedor 5400]

Miami was contacted again at 1136 on the irregular flight: Cuban Air Traffic Control warned Miami that the airplane, which had not made contact with Cuban Air Traffic Control, was getting dangerously close to three commercial airliners flying their regular international routes.

At 0933, a Taca airliner en route to Miami from Belize spotted the unidentified plane 25 nautical miles south of reporting point Maxim [del punto de reporte denominado maxim].

At 1039, the U.S. Government plane continued on its irregular course, passing within five miles of a Lacsa airliner en route to Managua from Miami 20 miles from reporting point Tadpo [del punto de reporte tadpo].

At 1054, the plane continued on its irregular course, passing within five nautical miles of a Challenge Air Cargo plane en route to Guayaquil from Miami just south of reporting point Ursus [del punto de reporte ursus].

Alarcon's letter to the ICAO president stresses that these flights jeopardize air safety for the entire region.

He added: We must do something to prevent an air catastrophe in the area, especially with the increasing number of U.S. Government aircraft crossing into Cuba's air corridor unannounced.

The letter points out that this denunciation is being made in compliance with paragraph nine of the ICAO Council resolution adopted at its latest meeting, in Montreal on 27 June.

Cuba: FAA Asked To Adopt Measures To Prevent Air Disaster

PA1307195596 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1846 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana (PL) — Cuba today requested that the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) adopt measures aimed at preventing an air disaster in the region that may be caused by irregular flights by U.S. Government airplanes.

A note by Division General Rogelio Acevedo, president of the Cuban Civil Aeronautics Institute (IACC), addressed to FAA head David Hinson stresses the dangerous flight plan carried out by a U.S. Government aircraft within Havana's flight information zone.

The incident took place on 11 July, was detected by Cuban radars at 0924 local time, and it was confirmed after contacting Miami flight control that the aircraft was "a U.S. Government aircraft operating in the zone as part of an assignment."

Despite repeated Cuban warnings, the aircraft continued its flight path and came dangerously close to the path of three other commercial flights by Guatemalan, Costa Rican, and even U.S. airlines.

We reiterate the Cuban Government's concern over the increase in these types of flights and the need for adequate coordination of activities deemed potentially dangerous for civilian aircraft, the IACC note states.

Likewise, the note also states that Cuba looks forward to the adoption of corresponding measures by the FAA in light of the increasing pattern of these types of incidents and "the need to prevent an air disaster."

Acevedo's note recalls that a similar incident took place on 1 July when a U.S. Government aircraft jeopardized safety measures by operating irregularly within the information zone without prior coordination.

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Cuba: Radio Claims Flotilla 'Failed To Provoke' Government

PA1407004096 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Report by Orlando Contreras, aboard a Cuban Revolutionary Navy ship off the coast of Havana; from the "Exclusive" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest flotilla out of Miami has clearly failed to provoke us. It left U.S. territory with full approval of that country's authorities, of course, but could not reach our jurisdictional waters. Orlando Contreras is aboard a ship belonging to the revolutionary war navy [marina de guerra revolucionaria]:

[Contreras] Thank you, Cesar. This is an exclusive to Radio Rebelde's "Exclusive" newscast. I am coming to you from the Cuban submarine hunter that brought local and foreign reporters nine miles into Cuban jurisdictional waters to witness the provocations of about 20 vessels out of Miami that left Key West at 0630. Those out of Miami who scheduled today's provocations failed. A U.S. Coast Guard vessel was posted 1.5 miles outside our territorial waters; another was posted about 6 miles outside of them. The flotilla of provokers left Key West at 0630; I spotted the first ships at about 1400. A U.S. Coast Guard Hercules C-130 and a pair of lightplanes flew over the ships, the lightplanes apparently part of the flotilla. I counted 10 vessels. They moved between the two U.S. Coast Guard vessels shortly before 1600 and remained there for a little over one hour before heading north. Cuban Coast Guard units watched closely from our territorial waters.

Cuba: TV Cites Newspaper Editorial Criticizing U.S. Law

PA1407021096 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Jul 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] THE NEW YORK TIMES today called on U.S. President William Clinton to forgo enforcement of the Helms-Burton law's most controversial clauses. The newspaper described the law as perverse and pointed out that it has already pitched the United States against its neighbors, Europe, Latin America, and even small children. The editorial says that it now looks as if Clinton signed the bill into law as a gratuitous concession to the Miami-based Cuban counterrevolutionaries. The newspaper also pointed out that Canada's reaction to the law could be to offer Canadian citizens the right to sue U.S. citizens who manage, own, or rent the many properties confiscated from those who remained loyal to the British crown and fled to Canada during the 18th Century. The newspaper also said that Ottawa is considering reprisals and encouraging Canadian citizens to boycott Florida, where some 2 million Canadians spend $1.3 billion every winter. International news agencies have described the editorial as harsh.

Cuba: Notifications Regarding U.S. Flights Reported

PA1407022196 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Jul 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuba today reported to the International Civil Aviation Organization and the FAA yet another unauthorized U.S. Government flight through Cuban airspace, this one on 11 July.

Ricardo Alarcon and Division General Rogelio Acevedo have both written authorities, saying that the flight was hazardous to air navigation in the region. The notes are in line with an ICAO Council resolution dated 27 June. The reported incident required an exchange of messages with Miami Air Traffic Control, as the aircraft crossed international air lanes and came dangerously close to three civilian aircraft inside the area. Copies of these messages were attached to the notes.

Cuba's notes reiterated the country's concern over the increasing number of these flights and the need for proper coordination of these activities, potentially hazardous to civilian aircraft. The notes also reiterate the need to take measures to prevent an air disaster because of these violations of air traffic standards and regulations in the area.

Cuba reported on 2 July that a similar incident had taken place on 25 June.

Cuba: TV Correspondents Recount Flotilla Activities 13 Jul

PA1407033596 Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 0140 GMT 14 Jul 96

[Report by Julio Acanda, Maribel Acosta, and Marta Moreno; from the "News Supplement" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Counterrevolutionary figures left Florida for Cuba aboard a small group of vessels this morning, following several days of propaganda campaigns. The so-called democracy flotilla did not enter Cuban territorial waters [words indistinct] extreme right-wing groups from Miami are wasting U.S. taxpayers' money. The self-styled democracy flotilla left Key West today with a dozen fewer vessels than what they had announced.

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Cuban territorial waters were not violated.

Over 30 Cuban and foreign journalists journeyed out of the port of Havana into calm national waters. Local and foreign correspondents headed north out of Havana this morning, after international news agencies carried urgent reports on the departure of the third Miami flotilla this year. The ship carrying the journalists stopped nine miles off the Cuban coast.

At 1130 [1530 GMT], Frigate Commander Lieutenant Jose Toirac reported during a makeshift news conference that U.S. Coast Guard vessels had expressed an interest in cooperating:

[Begin recording] [Toirac] The vessel you see on the horizon is a U.S. Coast Guard ship. It is 13.56 miles from the coast.

[Correspondent] You say they are there to prevent the flotilla from violating Cuban waters?

[Toirac] They are cooperating with us and are supporting us in this regard. [end recording]

At 1145, little information was available.

At 1230, we were broadcasting live from aboard the Cuban border patrol ship for the 1200 newscast. We were nine miles from El Morro, in Havana.

At 1300, we could only see U.S. Coast Guard ship 716 and the red helicopter parked on the back of it from our submarine hunter. It was more than 13 miles off the Cuban coast. Authorities on the Cuban ship said that the flotilla was some 15 miles from here.

At 1400, the Cuban border patrol vessel's radar picked up a flotilla plane under the blazing sun.

At about 1500, we spotted the ships, three other planes, and a U.S. Coast Guard plane. They were more than 13 miles off the Cuban coast. Reporters were conducting interviews on our ship while all of this was happening. Thanks to the communications systems, we learned that the U.S. Coast Guard ship had repeatedly warned the flotilla to remain inside international waters.

At about 1600, we could see a few flotilla vessels sitting more than 13 miles off our coast.

At 1700, the sea and weather were calm. The ships of the so-called democracy flotilla began to head back. The commander of our ship was reporting all the details:

[Begin recording] [Acanda] Commander, was there any attempt to violate Cuban territorial waters?

[Toirac] The U.S. Coast Guard imposed a 13.6-nautical mile limit on the flotilla, which was fortunately heeded. [end recording]

At about 1800, we could see El Morro. We returned to the always calm and beautiful city.

Cuba: Commander Says No U.S. Ships Violated Waters 13 Jul

PA1407143696 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 14 Jul 96

[From the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vessels of the flotilla organized by extreme right, Cuban-born elements living in the United States returned to that country on 13 July without violating Cuba's jurisdictional waters.

Frigate Commander Lieutenant Jose Toirac, commander of Submarine Chaser 321 of the Cuban Border Guard Troops, told the national and foreign media that none of the 13 ships that made it to the proximities of the island's sea limits crossed the 13.5 mile limit marked by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Summarizing the actions of the naval vessels that protected Cuba's national waters, Toirac said there was cooperation from the U.S. Coast Guard to avoid accidents even though there was no communication between the Cuban and U.S. units. Toirac said the members of the Miami flotilla gathered 1.6 miles from Cuba's territorial waters north of Havana's El Morro Lighthouse, held a mass, and released a balloon with anti-Cuban propaganda, according to what they were able to hear on the submarine chaser's radio equipment.

This has been the fifth such flotilla, the third one this year, organized against Cuba by those sectors. The purpose was to commemorate the sinking of a discarded tugboat which was in terrible sailing shape and which antisocial elements seized in 1994 at Havana's port to take it to the United States.

Haiti

Haiti: Senators Stop Studying Bill on Modernization

PA1307031796 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in Creole 1130 GMT 11 Jul 96

[From the "0730 Appointment" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The assembly of senators has decided to stop the process of studying the bill on modernization of the state-owned enterprises because there it lacks the details that could prove the effectiveness of this policy. The members of the Senate ask for further documents so they can understand the economic program of the Haitian Government better.

Senate Vice-President Samuel Madistin denounced that the Haitian Government has acted wrongfully given that

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not sufficient details have been given to shed light on the bill on modernization of the state-owned enterprises in the country. [passage omitted]

Consultations are going to be made on the bill on the modernization of the state-owned enterprises that was brought in last Thursday [4 July] before the Senate of the Republic. Various organized groups will have to give their opinion on this bill, according to the initiatives of the Senate, Sen. Madistin stated.

According to the decision that was adopted last week by the assembly of senators, the various sectors of society will be invited to give their opinions on the implications of the economic reform considered by the government so the parliamentarians can bring forth the most realistic position. [passage omitted]

Haiti: Deputies Approve Spirit of Bill on Early Retirement

PA1307042496 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in Creole 1130 GMT 11 Jul 96

[From the "0730 Appointment" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] We are informing you that the parliamentarians approved the spirit of this law that concerns the voluntary departure from public administration in Haiti after a debate that lasted over 6 hours, a stormy debate at the Haitian Parliament.

Furthermore, the deputies agreed to form a special commission including seven members who are going to work on this bill. The parliamentarians want to go fast so they can approve the laws on modernization of the state-owned enterprises in Haiti and reforms in the public administration.

Haiti: Deputies Receive Bill Brought by Minister Joseph

PA1307042596 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in Creole 1130 GMT 11 Jul 96

[From the "0730 Appointment" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The news is dominated by the bringing forth of the bill on early retirement in the public administration by Economy and Finance Minister Fred Joseph at the Chamber of Deputies on 11 July . The deputies finally received Economy Minister Fred Joseph and Planning Minister Jean-Eric Derice, who are the executive's delegates in charge of defending the bill on the structural adjustment program, at the Legislative Palace where they went yesterday.

The economy minister was allowed to make the statement of this bill that has to do with early retirement in the public administration. He appeared before the deputies following a meeting the day before between President Rene Preval, Prime Minister Rosny Smarth, and the Lavalas parliamentarians at the National Palace.

While talking to the members of the Chamber of Deputies, Fred Joseph reminded them that the Haitian Government's economic program is essentially based on the modernization of the country's state. He pointed out the need to put order in the public administration here, a step that will allow the country to improve its absorption capacity. The finance minister of the Republic asked for the understanding of the parliamentarians so they can implement the economic program of the Haitian Government. Ivener Millien reports:

[Begin recording] [Millien] It is impossible for the public administration to serve the nation if all the operational budget of the government is spent through payment of salaries. This is a statement made by Finance Minister Fred Joseph at the Parliament on Wednesday, 10 July while he was stating the grounds for the bill on voluntary withdrawal and early retirement.

The finance minister went on to say redefining the role and the modernization thought will remain a simple exercise if we do not attack the evil that is sapping the strength of the public administration such as corruption, anarchical recruitment, absence of materials, partisanship, ineffectiveness, and so on. Minister Joseph said that there is a commission working on how to put an end to crooked dealings in the public administration offices. The minister added that this commission has already recovered over 3,000 checks whose beneficiaries are not real state servants [3,000 chek zonbi] and amounting to 10 million gourdes. [passage omitted]

After the statement by the minister, the deputies discussed the admissibility of this bill. A number of 39 out of 49 deputies accepted the bringing forth of the bill on voluntary departure and early retirement.

We must tell you that a special commission aimed at working on this bill and made up of eight deputies including Guy Metayer, Arne Constantin, Alix Chataigne, Alix Fils-Aime, and Felix Litz has already been formed at the Chamber of Deputies. We will point out to you that the prime minister did not go down to the Parliament and that this bill was officially brought in by Finance Minister Fred Joseph and Planning Minister Jean-Eric Derice.

We are reminding you that the reform in the public administration will cause 7,500 people to lose their jobs within 18 months. [end recording]

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Haiti: Works on Bill Said Not To Be Ready by 15 Jul

PA1307045796 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in Creole 1130 GMT 12 Jul 96

[From the "0730 Appointment" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] We are informing you that the senators have sent the text of the bill on the modernization of the state-owned to the Haitian executive. According to Senator Paul Denis, a member of the finance commission within the Haitian Senate, the senators reproach the executive for submitting a bill on a paper without a heading and not signed. The parliamentarians continue to work seriously on the bill on the modernization. Sen. Denis has informed that the works of the commission will not be ready by 15 July as wished by the executive.

[Begin recording] [Denis] There was a problem of form and procedure that arose after, you know, the big debate that happened at the Parliament on whether the minister could bring in the bill or not. Even yesterday, senators raised a problem of procedure, that is the bill, that was brought in, does not have... [pauses] is not written on paper with the heading of the National Palace, and does not bear the signatures of the president and the ministers who should normally sign this bill.

So, after discussions in the assembly of senators, we have decided to invite the prime minister to send, to send back the bill in due and acceptable form, but there will not be a new bringing forth. It is only to comply with the formalities, to respect the forms... [pauses]

The studies continue. We just met — it is the finance commission — for discussions on the bill. Thus, the works continue and we hope to work quickly enough so that we in the commission can present our report in a short time. [end recording]

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Mexico: Zedillo Says Mexicans Want Pluralist Society

PA1307163596 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2057 GMT 10 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mexico City, 10 Jul (NOTIMEX) — President Ernesto Zedillo said today Mexicans want a society that is pluralist, united in what is fundamental, and abundant yet cemented by concord and a society that expresses itself freely within the law.

"We do not want a society divided by hatreds, divided by exigencies and enmities over legal matters, nor do we wish to live in a society marked by discord," he said during the presentation of the First Achievements of the 1995-2000 National Population Program.

He has said the nation needs for citizens to resolve their controversies with objectivity, decorum, and the rigor established by the law, "not by slander and scandal."

Mexicans do not want a society marked by strife among political leaders, even from the same party, religious leaders against religious leaders, business group leaders against business group leaders, and news media against news media, the president has said.

He has criticized those who seek to replace through sensationalism the role only the laws and institutions must play.

The president has credited the effort of many generations for building a strong and mature nation that needs for controversies among its citizens to be resolved with the objectivity, decorum, and rigor the law establishes.

Speaking before the secretaries of government, education, social development, agriculture, agrarian reform, and the environment, he added that Mexico is a nation that needs to work in a constructive manner to improve and consolidate its democratic society.

The president endorsed Mexicans' wish to live in a society where differences of opinion are freely expressed but always within the framework of the law, respect, and mutual respect.

He called on people to unify patriotism, creative initiative, talent, and the just desire to succeed every one of us has so political and social organizations can be better.

"Let us unite our efforts so our entire institutional and social structure can serve freedom more and better in the exercise of rights, education, and overall training of Mexicans. [no closing quotation mark as published]

As well as to promote and prepare productive activities, control and eradicate antisocial conducts and violence, exalt and instill the moral values of Mexican families. [sentence as received]

Mexico's strength, he has said, lies in the strength of family unity and solidarity, the reason why Mexicans are rightly demanding a future of freedom and responsibility, concord and equity, prosperity and welfare.

As for the population, President Zedillo has said that even though there will be 100 million Mexicans by 2000, population growth is registering a declining trend, as the overall fertility rate is going down.

He acknowledged that the greatest challenge to the national population policy is to break the reproduction cycle of poverty and demographic backwardness.

Mexico: Approximately 6,000 Aliens Said Detained This Year

PA1207184296 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2234 GMT 10 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Villahermosa, 10 Jul (NOTIMEX) — Approximately 6,000 undocumented aliens, most of them from Central America, have been detained in Tabasco State (in the country's southeast) so far this year, the National Migration Institute (INM) announced today.

According to the authorities, the report for the first half of the year indicates a 10 percent increase over the figures registered during the same period last year.

INM Representative in Tabasco Esteban Vega Franco has said policemen seized the aliens along the border of Tabasco with the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Veracruz, and the border with Guatemala.

The official has said approximately 450 Central Americans were detained last June for lacking legal documents and has announced that the "Beta Sur" Group will soon begin a patrol operation in Tabasco to cover several towns.

The objective of this operation is to fight the illicit activities by alien smugglers or "coyotes" and to prevent the violation of the aliens' human rights.

The INM official has said his agency will open an office in the town of Balancan to boost patrolling in the area along the border with Guatemala.

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Mexico: Business Sector Sees Economic Program Insufficient

PA1407225796 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 11 Jul 96 p 1

[Article by Patricia Munoz Rios — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Private Sector Center for Economic Studies [CEESP] cautions in a document the leadership of the business sector has delivered to President Ernesto Zedillo that the economic program followed by the current government "is beginning to have good results, although it is insufficient yet to overcome the profound and grave crisis."

The document, called Points of View on the Recent Evolution of the Economy and Its Outlook, states that the consolidation of macroeconomic equilibrium is far from being achieved and that this process, like the recovery process, is moving very slowly.

The document cautions that, only through "firmness" and "perseverance" in the implementation of the stabilization program derived from the Alliance for Economic Recovery, will it be possible to produce better fruits in the months to come.

The domestic market is just beginning to pick up again, but recovery is "not very homogeneous" since not all sectors are pulling out of the recession at the same time or with the same strength.

The export sector is promoting recovery, but the domestic market, which depends on the creation of jobs, better salaries, and investments, "remains weak," the businessmen tell President Zedillo in the document.

The document reports that, during the first quarter, five of the nine big branches of the GNP had positive growth rates but they represent only 36 percent of the GNP, and the other four, which represent 64 percent, are still enduring a recession.

This is why "the improvement the global figures show is not being noticed by the majority of the production apparatus or by the people," especially because the sectors that do not pull out of the recession are the ones that offer the largest number of jobs in the country and make high investments.

The document read to the president says that the progress made in stabilizing several financial and exchange houses and in correcting the lack of foreign trade equilibrium "are required conditions" for recovering economic growth.

Practically throughout all of last year and part of this one, the objective of the economic policy was to secure market stability; it is time now to see that the real sector, that is, that which produces and creates jobs, begins to recover in a gradual and consistent fashion.

It has to be so because, of the 59 branches of the manufacturing industry, 23 are expanding and 19 have been stabilized, but 13 continue declining.

The private sector believes that one fundamental element for speeding up and making recovery a steady endeavor is the structural reforming of the productive apparatus announced by the Federal Government with programs such as the Industrial and Export Promotion Policy.

The businessmen also expect a redefinition of fiscal policies and state privatization programs. The document concludes by saying that with these structural reforms and the implementation of a new labor culture in job centers, "the stabilization program will have greater opportunities to succeed this year and in the future."

Mexico: EPR Denies Links to Eight Persons Arrested by Army

PA1507012096 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 1

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The so-called Revolutionary People's Army (EPR) has denied that the eight persons that the Mexican Army arrested and presented to the public belong to their organization. The group also denied that its members receive a salary, as the National Defense Secretariat has claimed. The EPR, however, admitted ownership of the weapons and equipment found inside a cave in Guerrero.

In a press communique from the EPR General Command left for LA JORNADA attached to a utility pole in Juarez neighborhood, signed by Commander Jose Arturo — the first known name of a member of this organization — the group commented on "an armed propaganda action" held on 8 July in Teloloapan, where they distributed the Manifesto of Aguas Blancas and urged the population to join their struggle. The organization, which emerged on 28 June in El Vado, Aguas Blancas, during a ceremony to mark the first anniversary of the massacre of 17 peasants, denied that its members have stolen money and belongings from the population and clarified that "the EPR is governed by regulations that punish any violation of its norms."

The eight-point communique "categorically rejected any links to drug traffickers, common criminals," "much less to power groups in the government." The group also denied any links to democratic figures or social and

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political organizations that have always acted within the constitutional framework.

The EPR demanded that the federal and state governments refrain from using their existence and actions as an excuse "to continue their repressive actions."

As for the arrest of presumed EPR members, the communique noted that "none of our fighters have been captured," and it clarified that the persons that the Defense Secretariat presented on 9 July are peasants whose disappearance has been reported publicly by their families after 3 and 4 July, and four of these persons are civilians "who are completely unrelated to our army."

Commander Jose Arturo urged nongovernment human rights organizations to demand that the Federal Government unconditionally respect the rights of the peasant population and avoid committing war crimes.

He also called for "the broadest political mobilization" to prevent militarization, repression, kidnappings, torture, imprisonment, and murders, and to demand that the government abide by the Geneva agreements on the treatment of civilians in conflict zones.

Mexico: Report Profiles Revolutionary People's Army

PA1307154096 Mexico City PROCESO in Spanish 7 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Carlos Marin — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Revolutionary People's Army (EPR), which emerged in Aguas Blancas two weeks ago, is a real, guerrilla group from the military standpoint and not a group of individuals accountable only for the offense of carrying weapons exclusively used by the Armed Forces, as the Secretariat of Government and the Attorney General's Office (PGR) have stated

For the Secretariat of National Defense (Sedena), this group consists of the combined remnants of the Party of the Poor, the Lucio Cabanas Guerrilla Movement, the Clandestine Revolutionary Workers Party-Union of the People (PROCUP), the Sierra del Sur Peasant Organization (OCSS), and even "rebel" priests.

The origin of the conflict: the longstanding poverty of rural communities.

Publicly, the government has downplayed the importance of this armed group, but for the Army EPR members have more determination and better equipment than the Zapatists to launch war actions.

Pressed by reporters, President Ernesto Zedillo after one week, on 5 July, once again downplayed the importance of the EPR, saying the Guerrero issue concerns him as much as "every problem that appears in every state of the republic." In that state, he said "we evidently had a regrettable incident a few days ago, because a group wielding prohibited weapons turned up at a public meeting, making a violent and aggressive proclamation against the state of law. This in itself represents a cause for concern, although they did not commit any act of physical violence against the people who were there.

"The truth is it would be premature to assess that situation, because we do not really know who these people are, what their interests are, who has financed the weapons they had. What we have decided from the first moment is to enforce the law. The PGR has begun the corresponding investigation, because there is an offense to persecute. They possess illegal weapons, and the Army also has made inspections, under its purview, in enforcing the Federal Arms Law."

Inside the government, the scope of the problem is such that the number of troops deployed to that state does not total 3,500 soldiers, as has been reported, but, rather, more than twice that amount, in 12 battalions (of 600 men):

Those from Acapulco, Costa Grande, Iguala, Ciudad Altamirano, Petatlan and Atoyac; two from Chilpancingo and four *especially* from the Federal District.

The most immediate clues on which the Army's manhunt in the Guerrero mountains, valleys, and cities was based were a series of frank warnings from peasants in Tepetixtla one month prior to the Aguas Blancas killing and the report received by current State Governor Angel Eladio Aguirre Rivero on 5 July marking the first anniversary of the killing and emergence of the EPR.

The Army has recordings of the warnings made one year and one month ago.

The report dated two Fridays ago is signed by the Bengala Group.

Hilario Mesino Acosta, an alleged EPR member whose arrest became known 3 July, was one of the speakers who spoke at Tepetixtla before Governor Ruben Figueroa Figueroa and General Enrique Salgado, commander of the Ninth Military Region and head of Mexico City police.

"We Do Not Want To Wage a War"

On a sunny morning in late May 1995, Figueroa and Salgado arrived in Tepetixtla with an apparently reduced delegation. They came on foot along uneven trails that lead to the OCSS headquarters in front of which 200 or 300 local residents had placed some tables to hold a meeting.

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The governor had received a list of demands from the OCSS and wanted to talk with the petitioners.

First, he spoke with a young man who said he wished to "attempt to neutralize the wrong versions." He stated emphatically there in Tepetixtla: "We are proving that we are honest people, that we are peasants."

Another young man, who was less formal, was straightforward and brief:

"OCSS comrades, this day is a historical one for us, because here with us for the first time is a ranking, public official who will be able to personally listen to our feelings as peasants. It is necessary not to create agencies that constitute a calamity instead of providing public security. The people who remain silent will never be heard! Long live the OCSS!"

While some earnest women and girls were always refilling the glasses of the governor and the general with lemonade from a plastic [illegible]g that was on the floor, a third speaker, Benigno Gu[illegible]man Martinez, began to cry out: "Zapata lives, the fight continues!," and then he exclaimed:

"We want to live with dignity as human beings. We want to live in peace, but our organization will not think it over to take action if we are not heard.

"Look at our elderly people who are working when they should be resting."

And he got carried away:

"We do not want to wage a war. We would gladly wage a war, because it is better to die in a fight than to live on our knees. Death to the police corps in the community of Tepetixtla! Long live the OCSS! Fight, fight, fight, do not stop fighting!"

And so as not to leave any doubts in the mind of the 9th Region commander, he said:

"We reject the militarization of our country!"

When the Humble People "Get Excited"

The women of Tepetixtla went back and forth with a bucket refilling the glasses of their men and the visitors. Mesino, who was sitting next to Guzman, also spoke very little. He reminded Figueroa of the contents of the list of demands and referred to the repressive atmosphere prevailing in the area of Costa Grande.

"We have been cast aside and are threatened when we fight for our products and our rights."

Following him was a fifth speaker who listed the lack of basic services: water, power, sewage, transportation, roads.

Speaking of roads, he said "the Motorized Judicial Police comes here and takes away what we peasants have obtained through hard work and sacrifice rather than helping us. It takes away our 22-caliber weapons as well as everything else that helps us make a living, because we have nothing. We have to pay a fine to get them back."

One of the community's elders, dressed as a typical farmer, spoke last. While speaking, he made emphasis by moving his right arm and hand to the front, up, and down as if he were relearning childish behavior while, as a reflex, his left hand grabbed his serape hanging over his shoulder.

He recalled Mexican presidents beginning with Luis Echeverria up to this date, saying none of them did anything good for them.

He said the residents in Tepetixtla did not care to say "we are engaged in politics. We care to talk about extreme poverty."

He ironically recalled that "the president we now have," Ernesto Zedillo, made them requests and pledges:

"Vote for me; it is for your families' wellbeing... (his voice quivered). We should not trample on the humble people's dignity, because to trample on their dignity constitutes a mockery, citizen governor! We should have a little conscience."

He made it clear the despair shown by the youngsters and adults who spoke earlier was not estranged from this community.

"When these humble people get excited, a wave may come—his voice quivers again—a wave unlike any other, but these humble people have put up beyond their limit! We respect our rulers but so far have felt we have gone through so many abuses that we can no longer stand it."

He also addressed the 9th Region commander:

"I am sorry, general, if my humble words offend you. I say what I feel, personally speaking. That is what I say...."

"Strange Ideas"

Then it was the governor's turn to speak. He said General Salgado accompanied him to ascertain that the government and Army could work together, and he promised to fulfill the requests, as much as possible, because Guerrero has 3 million inhabitants, and everyone must be taken care of.

The general finished: "Do not be misled by strange ideas. You bear witness to the soldier's work here in

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Tepetixtla. The soldier is one of your own people, and many will be their children and brothers. We come from humble families. Our parents are peasants, workers. The Army is here to help you, to work with you. "Therefore, I see no reason why you are told strange ideas. I do not know what state militarization means. You act according to your own ideas."

He was enthusiastically applauded, and both the hosts and the guests concluded the meeting with a taco feast.

A month later, the state's Motorized Police stopped two OCSS trucks at the historical Aguas Blancas ford. The messengers who brought warnings of a war were expected to travel in those trucks.

The operation resulted in the massacre of 17 peasants, and Guerrero Governor Ruben Figueroa was compelled to resign.

The Report to Governor Aguirre

The Bengala Group sent the governor of Guerrero a report, six pages without letterhead, the same afternoon the EPR emerged in Aguas Blancas. The reported mentioned the "resolutions from the international forum against repression, massacres, and impunity summoned by the FAC-MLN [Broad Front for the Construction of the National Liberation Movement]."

The text included the group's observations about the sudden appearance of the new people up in arms.

Following is the full text of the report, respecting its syntax, spelling, and punctuation.

Private

C. CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNOR OF GUERRERO STATE

DOCTOR ANGEL AGUIRRE RIVERO

LOCATION: Coyuca de Benitez, Guerrero.

SUBJECT: Resolutions from the international forum against repression, massacres, and impunity summoned by the FAC-MLN

SECTOR: Political

DATE: June 26, 1996

REPORT:

Resolutions at the conclusion of the International Forum against repression, massacres, and impunity held at the UAG's [Autonomous University of Guerrero] School No. 16 in this place carried out within the program "Aguas Blancas is not forgotten," summoned by the FAC-MLN and commemorating the first anniversary of the Aguas Blancas massacre, with the slogan: Penal and political trial against Ruben Figueroa, the federal government, and others responsible for the massacre and complicity; for the disappearance of state branches in Guerrero, a plebiscite, and a new government; against neoliberalism and the financial capital's dictatorship; for a revolutionary and democratic change of society, and with the program:

The event began on the 25th with the departure of a 22-bus motorcade called "Aguas Blancas is not forgotten" from the main square in Mexico City, Federal District, to Coyuca de Benitez. Three additional buses arrived in Coyuca later.

On the 26th and 27th, the event was initially attended by 850 people, mostly indigenous peoples from 10 federal states, particularly from Chiapas, Michoacan, Tabasco, Oaxaca, Puebla, Mexico, the Federal District, and Guerrero, among others. The number of participants dropped to 450 on the 27th and increased to approximately 1,000 on the 28th, when the motorcade traveled from Coyuca de Benitez to the Aguas Blancas ford, because they were joined by approximately 150 people from Tepetixtla and surrounding areas.

It is appropriate to mention that a funeral mass was being held at the Aguas Blancas ford by Chiapas Bishop Samuel Ruiz, who arrived with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas Solorzano, Pablo Sandoval Ramirez, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, and Perez Palacios. They arrived hastily, stayed barely 10 minutes, and left just as hastily when 40 hooded people wearing military uniforms and carrying AK47 assault rifles arrived. They fired their weapons in the air, and some of the people gathered there began to flee, but others said "do not run, they are our people." The armed men then seized the microphone and read a communique addressed to the people of Mexico, the people of Guerrero, and the people of the world (the communique and a separate report on the 28th are attached).

Procup members who attended disguised under the name of the Route 100 group were identified. The following also attended: Reyna Belino Huisache (OCSS); Hector Ponce Radilla (PRD) [Party of the Democratic Revolution]; Omar Garibay Guerra (FAC-MLN); David Molina Francisco (PRD); Jorge Luis Salas Perez (PRD); Marco Antonio Marcos Cabanas (Procup); Bernardo Ranferi Hernandez Acevedo (FAC-MLN); Fortunato Abelino Huisache, Regulo Ramirez (OCSS); Fernando Valdovinos (PRD); Orlando Romero Romero, Maria Hernandez Hernandez (PRD); Procuro Valente Gil (FEUG) [expansion unknown]; Deputy Carlota Botey; Benigno Guzman Martinez (OCSS); Marino Sanchez Flores; Hilario Mesino Acosta; Melino Esteves Mondragon; Regulo Resendiz Jimenez; Luis Mesino;

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Rocio Mesino Mesino; Jose de Molina (protest singer); Adolfo Plancarte Jimenez; and Apolinar Sugueda Dorantes.

Next, the document lists the 52 resolutions issued by the previously mentioned forum.

The text ends by commenting on "the social security system established by the FAC-MLN members."

Coyuca de Benitez was practically sieged, because one or two observers with cameras, video cameras, and CB portable radios were placed at each corner. They also installed two roadblocks to bar the entry to the Aguas Blancas ford, and Chiapas Indians, bearing clubs and rods, stopped the people who were going to the funeral and did not allow them to enter the ford although it was known that hooded EPR members would be present at the event. It was noticeable that the indigenous peoples were totally politicized and were trained to observe all the people who tried to get through. The people who managed to get to and enter the installations of School No. 16 where the international forum was held (no foreign journalists attended the event) were assigned a pin of one color when they arrived, and the color of the pin was changed the next day to impede their access to the ford.

A purple and fushsia canvas was placed under the ceiling of School No. 16 to distort the photos taken in the room and to avoid easy identification of the people who attended the event.

OCSS members accused Commander Abraham Noriega Cantu of being repressive.

Respectfully,

Bengala Group

Benigno Guzman and Hilario Mesino

In Sedena, Benigno Guzman Martinez of the OCSS—the one who told Figueroa and General Salgado about a year ago "our organization will not have any qualms about holding demonstrations" if they were not heard—is considered to be part of the protection tactic to cover the arrival and departure of the hooded officials with goat horns [AK-47 submachine guns].

Out of the four Mesinos mentioned in the report to Governor Aguirre, Hilario Mesino Acosta, another one of the speakers at Tepetixtla is the brother of Alberto Mesinos who was killed in a clash between Army soldiers and Poor People's Party guerrillas on 2 December 1974.

Attorney General Oscar Flores reported in 1979 that at El Otatillo, where Lucio Cabanas was killed, 42 individuals, among them Alberto Mesino Acosta, also were killed.

Separate to the report issued by Flores Sanchez, another report (Case No. 836) revealed that Mesino, the same as many of the remaining 42 individuals, was actually murdered.

Alberto "was from Escorpion, Atyoyac de Alvarez municipality, kidnapped on 18 July 1974 by Army soldiers who took him to the Agua Fria community, where his mother, Juana Acosta, saw him and also saw when they took him away in a helicopter...."

The EPR's makeup is, from the military viewpoint, a mixture of people and actions intermingling from Lucio Cabanas' guerrillas to kidnappings and bank holdups in recent years and in which the mark of the PDP and the Procup is much deeper than a simple, regrettable incident.

Mexico: SCT Urges Replacement of Communications Satellites

PA1507035996 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0018 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mexico City, 11 Jul (EFE) — The Secretariat of Communications and Transport (SCT) stated today that there is an urgent need to replace the Mexican satellite system, which by the end of the year will be operating at 80 percent of its total capacity.

The Secretariat issued a communique today saying that the three satellites in the Mexican system are currently meeting the "voice, video, and data" requirements of more than 340 firms and private and public companies in the country.

The "Morelos II" satellite, which is operating at 80 percent capacity, will reach the end of its useful lifespan by July 1998; "Solidaridad I," which is operating at 85 percent capacity, will stop operating in 2007; and Solidaridad II, which is operating at 70 percent capacity, will cease to operate a year later.

In view of the near end of Morelos II's useful lifespan, "there is an urgent need to replace it, because at least 24 months are needed to build a new satellite, and two more months to launch it, test it, and to transfer users to the new system," the Secretariat said.

The Mexican Government recently opened a bid to replace Morelos II, which was won by the U.S. company Hughes Communications Inc.

The government hopes that a new satellite will give Mexico access to the U.S. market, and thus, will strengthen its telecommunications industry.

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El Salvador

El Salvador: President Reacts 'Angrily' to Visa Revocation

PA1307042896 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol reacted angrily yesterday when he was informed that the U.S. Government had decided to cancel his Colombian colleague Ernesto Samper's visa.

"The attitude of the United States is objectionable. Countries in Latin America and the rest of the world must side with President Samper and Colombia," Calderon Sol stated.

The Salvadoran president said he trusted Colombia's valid judicial procedures and believes that Ernesto Samper and his government are legitimate until the contrary is proven.

Calderon promised to study the situation and, if necessary, will take a stand against the decision. "The United States has no right to judge another country," he noted.

The U.S. decision was made several days after the Colombian Congress acquitted Ernesto Samper of charges that drug-trafficking money filtered into his presidential campaign.

There is a possibility that the Central American presidents will issue a joint reaction against the U.S. decision at the Central American presidential summit that starts in Costa Rica today.

El Salvador: End of U.S. Aid Said To Have Serious Effect

PA1407191096 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2201 GMT 11 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] San Salvador, 11 Jul (ACAN-EFE) — Sources from the Salvadoran Foundation for Coffee Research (Procafe), a private organization, said today the suspension of $3.2 million the United States had already approved for Procafe will have serious effects on coffee production.

Officially confirming the withdrawal of AID assistance, Procafe President Eduardo Barrientos said "the drop registered by the international coffee prices will be more severe, because production costs will surge without technology."

Procafe has replaced the state-run Salvadoran Institute for Coffee Research (ISIC) in the application of technological research to the farming of coffee, the leading export in El Salvador.

Barrientos said AID has decided to withdraw its assistance from a fund of $12 million it had approved in 1992 on the condition that local coffee farmers would contribute one dollar per every quintal (a 60 kg sack) exported to a matching fund of $11.2 million.

Through a legislative decree, the executive reduced by approximately 25 percent this contribution so as to give it to the Salvadoran Coffee Council (CSC), a state-run organization that contracted a debt for $930,000 in Colombia last December to help recover coffee prices on the international market.

Barrientos said the diversion of these funds has caused the suspension of $3.2 million in assistance AID should have begun disbursing in January 1996.

"We have tried to wash our dirty linen at home" in meetings with the Economy and Agriculture and Livestock Ministries and the CSC, but we did not reach any agreement to recoup the diverted funds, Barrientos argued.

If AID does not restore its assistance, there will be "a medium-term crisis in the national coffee industry, because there will be no transfer of technology, and production costs will rise," Barrientos said.

"Procafe has no connection whatsoever with the coffee trade policy, but we have been forced to pay the debt contracted (by the CSC) in Colombia," he said.

El Salvador will be more vulnerable to the effects of the unstable, international coffee prices, he added, because "there will be no solution to cut costs and increase production."

According to official sources, El Salvador earned as much as $422 million in foreign exchange from its coffee exports in 1995.

Procafe affirms that the small coffee farmers, who represent 80 percent of the country's producers, will be the hardest hit by this problem, because the small coffee farmers lack the ability to finance their own technical assistance, a point which will, in turn, generate "many financial losses."

Guatemala

Guatemala: Arzu Says Death Penalty Will Be Enforced

96CA0253A San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 6 Jul 96 p 1

[Unattributed article: "President Confirms Death Penalty Will Be Applied" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] (ACAN-EFE)—Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu confirmed yesterday that the

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death penalty will be applied in accordance with resolutions handed down by the Supreme Court of Justice (CSJ).

Arzu joined with the presidents of the Legislative and Judicial bodies, Carlos Garcia and Mario Aguirre, respectively, in analyzing such issues as kidnappings, drug trafficking, car thefts in the country.

In brief statements to the press at the close of a meeting held in Supreme Court chambers, Arzu said that resolutions emanating from the Court would be complied with.

The president was asked whether he would pardon prisoners Roberto Giron and Pedro Castillo, sentenced to death upon being convicted for the rape and murder of a 4-year-old girl, a crime which occurred in April 1993 on the southern coast of our country.

The chief of state's answer was categorical: "Application of the death penalty is the responsibility of the courts, and we have stated that we will comply with that decision." "We shall enforce the decision of the courts of justice when that final resolution has been handed down, obviously," Arzu remarked. The president further emphasized that "we must abide by our constitution." Giron and Castillo are the first Guatemalans in 13 years to await the gallows following the president's decision not to pardon them.

Both have asked the president for mercy, but the latter stressed yesterday that he will not avail himself of his power to grant a pardon and commute a sentence handed down by a court in the southern city of Escuintla where the peasants committed the crime.

Guatemala: Visas Not Required for Certain Visitors

96CA0253B San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 6 Jul 96 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Countries Sending the Most Tourists to Island Exempted From Visa Requirement" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The visa requirement for entering any Central American country was eliminated yesterday for nations sending the most tourists to the island, official sources have announced in Guatemala.

Ricardo Arenas, Guatemalan director of migration, stated at a press conference that the countries so exempted are the United States, Mexico, Canada, the European Union and a few South American nations.

"This is the first signal given by the region aimed at promoting tourism" as a bloc, the official noted at the close of the 9th Meeting of the Central American Committee of Directors of Migration held in this capital. Arenas and his counterparts from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama hope the measure will yield "positive" results for tourism and the regional economy.

The officials also discussed the need to promote widespread use of a tourist card designed to facilitate visitors' access to countries having such a visa requirement.

The measure is one of the presidential mandates contained in the Regional Action Program To Develop Tourism that came out of the 17th Summit Meeting of Central American Presidents held this year in Montelimar (Nicaragua).

Honduras

Honduras: Reina Dispels Coup Rumors, Says Cabinet Changes

PA1207193296 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Report by Jose Danilo Izaguirre; from the "Morning Newspaper" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Carlos Roberto Reina has met the press on a number of issues, including his upcoming trip to Taiwan and possible cabinet changes upon his return.

Reina also commented on the Supreme Court of Justice's decision to extend special privileges to military officers on trial who are found guilty:

[Begin Reina recording] I have not yet read the Supreme Court ruling. The law states that no branch of government is allowed to interfere in the decision-making processes of another. The Supreme Court of Justice will know how to explain the reason for such a ruling.

[Correspondent] How do you feel about grass-roots organizations deciding to take over Ciudad Mateo? How about your trip to Taiwan?

[Reina] Taking over Ciudad Mateo made an already serious problem even more serious. This is a truly unfortunate mistake. The houses in that community cannot be occupied. The takeover only serves to cause anguish, provoke confrontation, and shed negative light on a problem that we have all described as extremely serious. I urge anyone with ideas that in no way can be described as constructive to put those ideas out of their heads now. We are trying to solve this problem.

I leave for Taiwan tomorrow. My first stop will be San Jose, to meet the Central American presidents and Chilean President Eduardo Frei. We will discuss Central America's relations with Mercosur [Common Market

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of the South]. Chile has proved very insightful and responsible with its economic development. They can provide us with tremendous assistance with regard to forestry, education, and technical issues. I arrive in Taiwan on 13 July, in response to numerous invitations from the Taiwanese Government. Taiwan's relations with Central America are significant: Taiwan is a member of the Central American Development Bank and has offered assistance on several social projects in our country. I am quite honored to have received such an invitation. [end recording]

President Reina said the following with regard to Operations Pantera and Leopardo:

[Begin recording] [Reina] I have already spoken with General Hung on the cost of these operations and on the executive branch's willingness to fund them.

[Correspondent] How much?

[Reina] The people have been calling for operations like these. The executive branch will offer as much financial support as it can.

As for the other issue [not further identified], conceptually speaking it impossible. It is preposterous for this to be described as a coup against the state if it entails changes within the Armed Forces. The head of state is the president of the Republic. This is merely rumor. The Armed Forces back Gen. Hung in full. He was appointed under the law and is doing as much as possible to carry out the duties that the Constitution assigns to the institution. [end recording]

President Reina described recent rumors of a military coup against Gen. Hung Pacheco as mere rumor:

[Begin recording] [Reina] This is merely rumor. The Armed Forces back Gen. Hung in full. Coup rumors raise public concerns every time there is a meeting of the military. It is all a figment of the imagination. The institution backs Gen. Hung Pacheco, considering the legitimacy of his appointment and the manner in which he handles his office.

[Correspondent] Dr. Ramon Custodio, president of the Honduran Human Rights Defense Committee, claims that your authorization for the military to take to the streets is illegal and has expressed his complete opposition to such a situation. On the other hand, what can you say about the loss of the documents related to the illegal Chinese aliens [chinazo] issue?

[Reina] Dr. Custodio is not a lawyer. The best lawyers and government legal advisers point to the legitimacy of a decision that arises from a call by the people for military presence to guarantee the rights of all citizens. It is untrue that the decision is illegal. It is untrue. As for the question regarding the loss of documents, that is an issue that is being investigated by the courts and the Office of the Prosecutor General. [end recording]

The president added that he has not ruled out making several cabinet changes.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua: Candidate Robelo on Electoral Council Decision

PA1207144796 Managua Canal Dos Television in Spanish 1600 GMT 7 Jul 96

[From the "This Week" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Alvaro Robelo, presidential candidate for The Integrated Nicaraguan Alliance, has commented on the Supreme Electoral Council's [CSE] decision to veto his presidential aspirations:

[Begin recording] [Robelo] This ruling is a political one. I believe they are virtually afraid of me, because they know I am here in Nicaragua and came to tell the Nicaraguan people there is another alternative, not the same as always.

I believe this ruling is a shameful one, a political ruling, an electoral fraud. I am convinced that perhaps the long arm of the MRS [Sandinist Renewal Movement], or of Sergio Ramirez, or of Jorge Samper, the husband of the CSE president, has influenced this decision. This had been plotted for a long time now, but the motives behind the ruling were absurd.

The Constitution states that he who at some point has relinquished his citizenship cannot be president or vice president candidate. Because they were unable to prove I have relinquished my citizenship, because [words indistinct] Italian Foreign Ministry [words indistinct] no relinquishment exists, they have resorted to the subterfuge. I have accepted it, as I said before, out of marriage; therefore, this is a juridical monstrosity. They are way out of line.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] alliance, what is the future of this political movement?

[Robelo] Only the ANC [National Conservative Action] is in place at this moment. We are going to have to join them, to continue fighting. We will not stop here. I am still hopeful an appeal can be presented. The purpose of this recourse would be to review the ruling, which would be a public and oral procedure.

[Reporter] Will you maintain the same drive as you did during the campaign, even after being turned down as a candidate?

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[Robelo] Of course, yes. I will travel all over Nicaragua to explain to the people what has happened. We must see the consequences this ruling will have before the international community. I will fight this ruling before the European Union and in every international forum. I will denounce this ruling before the International Court of Justice at The Hague as well. This electoral process is a fraud; it is illegal and illegitimate, because it contains fraud.

[Reporter] As a result, will you stop participating in this electoral process?

[Robelo] I will continue to participate in the struggle with my people; we will see how we will do so. One must be pragmatic in life.

The last thing we have.... [pauses] We have to see what the people tell us. Many alternatives are open. [end recording]

Nicaragua: Lacayo Files Writ for Revision of Court Ruling

PA1307164196 Managua Nicavision Canal 12 Television Network in Spanish 0400 GMT 11 Jul 96

[From the "Extravision" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Antonio Lacayo today met face-to-face with the person that has led the group of magistrates who have disqualified him from participating in the elections. At the Supreme Electoral Council today, Lacayo filed a writ for a revision of the ruling that has left him out of the electoral race, even though the ruling cannot be appealed:

[Begin Lacayo recording] The ruling cannot be appealed, and I have no intention of resorting to the Supreme Court of Justice or anything like that, but I believe the ruling is too short, only three lines, and it does not explain why they have ordered my death. They have simply stated: You are dead.

I believe my writ for revision gives the magistrates a series of elements, a series of constitutional articles that, in my opinion, are clear and should be revised. We want them to revise them and also want them to tell us their final decision; nevertheless, we state in the writ that we would abide by the ruling even if the ruling is again adverse to us, even if we dissent, even if we do not agree with it. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the National Project today registered Benjamin Lanzas and Maria Auxiliadora Perez de Matus as its ticket to participate in the next elections.

Nicaragua: Electoral Developments Through 13 Jul

PA1407204496

[FBIS Report] The following is a compilation of reports on developments leading up to Nicaragua's 20 October 1996 elections monitored through 13 July.

During a rally attended by 10,000 people on 7 July, Daniel Ortega, presidential candidate for the Sandinist National Liberation Front, FSLN, called for a Sandinist discourse and action full of joy, hope, and love to win the October elections. He noted the need "to go door to door and to visit village after village to convince the people of the need to vote for the FSLN." The FSLN "is the only party truly interested in solving the problems of the poor farmers, technicians, professionals, women, youths, and children who are suffering from unemployment and hunger," Ortega added. (Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 8 Jul 96 pp 1, 8)

An 8 July, Managua-datelined report states that vice-presidential candidate Benjamin Lanzas on 7 July became the presidential candidate of the National Project, Pronal, after the Supreme Electoral Council, CSE, disqualified former Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo, who is President Chamorro's son-in-law, because the Constitution bans relatives of the current president from running for the Presidency. Lacayo will run, however, for a deputy seat. Pronal has selected Maria Auxiliadora Perez de Matus, executive director of the Nicaraguan Women's Institute, as the new vice president candidate. (Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0922 GMT 8 Jul 96)

CSE President Rosa Maria Zelaya has said the candidates the CSE has disqualified cannot appeal this decision, because CSE rulings on electoral matters are unappealable. (Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 9 Jul 96 p 4)

The CSE has advised Fabio Gadea Mantilla and Enrique Quinonez Tuckler, leaders of two factions of the Nicaraguan Resistance Party, PRN, that the party must present a single list of candidates for the 10 October elections. The CSE has given the two leaders three days to reach an agreement. Quinonez has urged PRN President Gadea to work with him on a single list, but Gadea has said he will not negotiate. (Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 Jul 96 pp 1, 16)

A tripartite meeting was held to discuss financing for the elections. The legislative, judicial, and electoral branches met on 3 July to evaluate the budget deficit of the elections. The National Assembly has said the government must contribute 33 million cordobas, but the executive branch says only 17 million. Rosa Marina Zelaya, president of the Supreme Electoral Council, has

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said the money is badly needed to install voting booths. (Managua Nicavision Canal 12 Television Network in Spanish 0400 GMT 9 Jul 96)

Nicaragua will receive $3 million from the European Union for the elections and the clearing of mines in the country. A European delegation that will sign the cooperation agreements will be arriving next week, according to the new EU ambassador to Nicaragua. (Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1130 GMT 9 Jul 96)

Maria Auxiliadora Perez Luna, who was selected vice presidential candidate for the National Project, was accused yesterday by members of the Liberal Alliance headed by Arnoldo Aleman of being a Guatemalan citizen; therefore, she cannot replace Benjamin Lanzas, who has occupied the post left by Antonio Lacayo. She is the second woman to be nominated vice-presidential candidate. (Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 9 Jul 96)

Noel Vidaurre, presidential candidate for the Nicaraguan Conservative Party, went to Chichigalpa on 7 July and pledged his support for the sugarcane workers who are demanding a 25-percent salary increase; he also promised the creation of a credit bank exclusively for peasants. (Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 10 Jul 96 p 10)

Antonio Lacayo on 10 July registered Benjamin Lanzas Selva and Maria Auxiliadora Perez Luna new presidential and vice-presidential candidates, respectively, for the National Project at the Supreme Electoral Council. Lacayo also gave CSE President Rosa Marina Zelaya Velasquez a document appealing the sentence that has knocked him out of the 20 October presidential race. (Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 11 Jul 96 p 4)

According to a recent poll, Daniel Ortega and his Sandinist National Liberation Front continue to gain ground in voter preference. For the first time since 1990, the FSLN reached a 30-percent voter preference; that is, 6 percentage points higher than it was 60 days ago. If the trend continues, Ortega could win the elections in the first round. (Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 11 Jul 96 pp 1, 8)

Antonio Lacayo suffered another setback on 11 July when the CSE turned down an appeal to review the sentence that has kept him from running as a presidential candidate for the 20 October 1996 election. Meanwhile, Eden Pastora, former presidential candidate for the Democratic Action Movement, has registered to run as candidate for mayor of Managua. (Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 15)

A 10 July, Managua-datelined report states that Nicaraguan police have arrested Isaias Sandoval Rojas, who reportedly had plotted to assassinate Arnoldo Aleman, Liberal Party presidential candidate, in San Carlos, on the border with Costa Rica. (Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1810 GMT 10 Jul 96)

The Nicaraguan Government has announced it has no money to finance the parties' political campaigns. An additional tax was suggested, but Finance Minister Emilio Pereira has ruled out this possibility. Rosa Marina Zelaya, president of the Supreme Electoral Council, has said some solution must be provided; otherwise the 20 October elections could be screwed up. (Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 4)

Frank Duarte and Emilio Molina have presented themselves as candidates for president and vice president, respectively, for the National Conservative Action Party. (Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 12 Jul 96)

In a news conference, the group Ethics and Openness has presented Rudy Vega as adviser to the national volunteers who will serve as observers in the coming October elections. Vega expects to train approximately 500 people. (Managua Radio Nicaragua in Spanish 1130 GMT 12 Jul 96)

The two factions of the Nicaraguan Resistance Party have reached an agreement and have presented to the Supreme Electoral Council a list of their new candidates, Jose Rivas for president and Enrique Quinonez for vice president. (Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 pp 1, 16)

The police have arrested Pedro Rafael Mayorga, presidential candidate for the Nicaraguan Democratic Alliance Party, who has been charged with swindling, according to a 12 July, Managua-datelined report. (Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2243 GMT 12 Jul 96)

Rosa Zelaya, president of the Supreme Electoral Council, has said more than one million citizens will have received their identification cards by the time the coming elections are held on 20 October. (Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 13 Jul 96 pp 1, 12)

Panama

Panama: Meetings With High-Ranking U.S. Officials Noted

PA1307174696 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 13 Jul 96 p A-2

[Report by Henry Raymond]

[FBIS Translated Text] The arrival of Panamanian Foreign Minister Ricardo Arias in Washington has given

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rise to speculation of a swift decision on the permanence of U.S. military bases in Panama.

The anticipation of official circles that Arias's visit could renew the bogged down negotiations to decide whether Panama believes it is convenient to allow a limited presence of U.S. military personnel in its territory is based on the intense consultations Arias made in recent weeks to gain support from various political parties before beginning formal talks with the United States.

In addition, Arias's recent remarks that an extension of the permanence of the bases would not be for less than five years or more than 20 have been interpreted as a clear sign that Panama believes the political and economic uncertainties that have forced the Panamanian Foreign Ministry to suspend the talks scheduled for November 1995 have been overcome.

In a brief conversation with EL PANAMA AMERICA following his arrival in Washington, Arias confirmed he has a meeting scheduled for 16 July with U.S. official Strobe Talbott and members of Congress, but Arias refused to give further details.

The foreign minister is expected to meet with members of the U.S. National Security Council, Jeffrey Davidow, and other high-ranking, government officials, including "drug czar" General Barry McCaffrey.

Official circles believe that because of the foreign minister's recent efforts to achieve a political consensus in his country, the obstacles that have hindered negotiations to determine whether the permanence of U.S. military bases in Panama after the year 2000 is in the mutual interest of the two countries and the security of the hemisphere have been cleared.

The highest-ranking foreign policy officials of the Clinton administration believe it is likely that during the meetings with Talbott and other officials, the Panamanian foreign relations minister will at least be able to set a tentative date for the start of bilateral consultations, as proposed by the two presidents during their meeting at the White House on 6 September 1995.

The formal farewell ceremonies scheduled for the foreign minister include a reception at the residence of Assistant Secretary of the Army Joe Reeder, who is also president of the Panama Canal Commission, and a farewell cocktail reception in the Panamanian Embassy in Washington organized by Charges d'Affaires Fernando Eleta Casanova.

Although these appraisals come from President Clinton's direct advisers, State Department rumors lead to the opposite conclusion. State Department officials insist the Panamanian Government "is not ready yet" to decide whether it wants a continuation of the U.S. military presence in Panama, even though this presence would be reduced.

Panama: Official on Proposal for Center Against Drugs

PA1407191696 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 13 Jul 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Acting Foreign Minister Alejandro Ferrer has said the proposal presented by the Panamanian Government to the Rio Group, and later extended to the United States, of creating a multilateral center against drug trafficking and related crimes is not conditioned in any way to the permanence of U.S. military forces in Panamanian territory after the year 2000. During a news conference held at the Foreign Ministry building in Amador, Ferrer was accompanied by Victor Manuel Cucalon, general director of international economic relations and acting deputy foreign minister, Legal Affairs Adviser Adolfo Ahumada, and Marcel Salamin, director of foreign conferences of the Foreign Ministry.

Panama: President Regrets U.S. Decision on Samper Visa

PA1407153096 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 14 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Eva Aguilar]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ernesto Perez Balladares said yesterday that he regrets the U.S. decision to suspend Colombian President Ernesto Samper's visa to enter the United States but stated that he respects the relations existing between those two countries.

The United States announced on 11 July it had suspended Samper's U.S. visa alleging he is "committed to drug traffickers."

The Colombian Congress absolved Samper of the accusations made against him of allegedly receiving money from drug cartels to finance his 1994 political campaign.

Perez Balladares said: "Personally, it hurts me very much, and I truly regret the (U.S. Government) decision because of what the elimination of President Samper's visa means, but from the viewpoint of relations between states, I have to respect the bilateral relations between the United States and Colombia."

The chief of state said he wishes the relations between the two countries were "less tense and aimed more at the struggle against drug trafficking and less a boss/underling relationship."

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Meanwhile, Julio Berrios, president of the Isthmian International Law Academy, has said that the U.S. measure is atypical and that no chief of state can have his visa canceled if the country he represents maintains relations with the other.

According to Berrios, if the United States wanted to punish Colombia, it should have broken relations with the country, not cancel the president's visa.

He has said the suspension of a president's visa "makes no sense" in international law, because they travel with a diplomatic passport. Besides, he has said, the Colombian Congress already has ruled that the president is innocent of using drug-trafficking money in his political campaign.

The representative of international law attorneys believes that Samper has waged a strong campaign against drug trafficking and that this U.S. measure contributes "to opening further the gap" existing between the United States and Colombia.

Panama: Meetings With U.S. Officials Said 'Very Positive'

PA1407165796 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 14 Jul 96 p A-2

[Report by Henry Raymont]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panamanian Foreign Minister Ricardo Alberto Arias, who began biding farewell as ambassador to the United States yesterday, has termed as "very positive" his first meetings with important officials of President Bill Clinton's administration.

"The talks," he has said, "have been very positive with much backing for Panama and the government of President Ernesto Perez Balladares."

Arias, who will remain in this capital for a week, summarized his assessment during a telephone conversation with this EL PANAMA AMERICA correspondent after his meetings with Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and other important State Department officials.

The foreign minister has said that contrary to what Panamanian publications critical of Perez Balladares' policies have alleged, he did not find that the support the Panamanian Government enjoys in Washington has suffered because of allegations his election campaign received contributions from individuals accused of being involved in drug trafficking.

Arias said that Talbott "remembered well and with much interest" the subjects of the conversations he had with President Perez Balladares during his visit to Panama as chief of the U.S. delegation to the 26th UN General Assembly, over which Arias presided.

Prior to his meeting with Talbott, the foreign minister had a meeting with three assistant secretaries of states: Jeffrey Davidow, of Latin American affairs; Robert Gelbard, of international narcotics affairs; and Thomas McNamara, of security and military affairs. At this meeting, Arias was accompanied by Panamanian Charge d'Affaires Fernando Eleta Casanova.

"We discussed several bilateral relations issues," he said. "As for the bases issue," he added: "I gave them an update on the meetings I have held with all the political parties to know what their positions are."

The foreign minister would not comment directly on this matter, but other diplomatic sources have confirmed there is a general agreement that consultations on the future of the bases the United States is to vacate before the year 2000 could begin before the November U.S. presidential election takes place.

These sources believe "exploratory conversations will take place even if there is no agreement on the matter."

According to the source, "the foreign minister found conflicting positions within all the parties and perhaps within all the sectors of society." He has said: "All that is needed now is for the Panamanian Government to decide whether it wants a limited U.S. military presence, for how long, and at what cost."

He said: "No one wants Panama to be shortchanged in the benefits keeping the bases should bring."

The meeting with Talbott and Washington's foreign policy authorities took place the afternoon of 12 July although State Department officials had announced the meetings would take place on 16 July. The last-minute change probably took place because Talbott, a former TIME correspondent in Moscow, will travel to Russia with Vice President Albert Gore next week.

In a strict protocol sense, Arias' trip is considered ceremonial and personal, because he has scheduled a round of farewells after having served for almost two years as President Ernesto Perez Balladares's first ambassador to the United States, a post his father, Ricardo Arias Espinosa, occupied twice during the 1950's and 1960's. Ricardo Alberto Arias left his ambassadorial post when he was appointed to succeed Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo when the latter was hospitalized due to a lung disease and had to resign.

Arias will hold meetings at the White House this week with President Clinton's main adviser for hemispheric affairs, Thomas "Mac" McLarty, important officials of the Departments of Defense and Commerce, and several congressmen.

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Panama: More Reaction to Howard Drug-Base Proposal

PA1207193096 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 11 Jul 96

[Report by Sorhay Mariel Bambu; from the "RPC Television News" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The president's proposal that the United States extend its military presence to set up a counternarcotics center on Howard Air Force Base has drawn reaction.

The Interoceanic Region Authority [ARI] and the National Assembly's Counternarcotics Commission appear to be at odds over the proposal.

ARI Administrator Nicolas Ardito Barletta finds it constructive and beneficial for the hemisphere. Ardito Barletta pointed out that he has not yet taken a final stand on the proposal to set up a counternarcotics center on Howard Air Force Base or to transform the military airport into a transshipment terminal:

[Begin Ardito Barletta recording] It is feasible. It could be incorporated into the decision to be adopted and would be considered. [end recording]

Even though Legislator Alberto Aleman Boyd, president of the National Assembly's Counternarcotics Commission, supports the president's proposal, he still expresses a certain degree of indecision with respect to exactly where such a counternarcotics center should be located:

[Begin Aleman Boyd recording] We must examine the proposal closely and not make any hasty decisions. We must carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages. [end recording]

It was also disclosed that several Central American countries would run the center and that it would not be under exclusive U.S. control.

A final decision on the issue is expected in about one month.

Panama: Workers Disagree With Free Use of U.S. Base

PA1407222096 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 13 Jul 96 p 19

[Report by Diamar Aparicio B.]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gabriel Castillo, spokesman for the Authentic Confederation of Independent Workers (CATI), has said that it would be a "catastrophe" for the Panamanian Government to let the U.S. Government use the Howard Air Force Base for free. Castillo said CATI could close off streets to protest the measure.

He said that the Panamanian Government — in the Panama 2000 Forum — agreed to not negotiate or offer special concessions regarding the future presence of U.S. military bases in Panamanian territory without first studying the scope of such an action. "The government cannot make such a decision without fulfilling the commitment made in the Panama 2000 Forum. But, if a special concession is indeed made, we will have to believe that dialogue and consensus are no longer possible in Panama," he said.

Castillo said that the future of the state, sovereignty, and the Panamanian people's hope to use these areas for national development are at stake with this action. In addition, Panama expects to reach the year 2000 without armies, whether Panamanian or American.

If such a unilateral decision is made, CATI will consider taking protest measures, including closing off streets.

Castillo's remarks occurred after President Ernesto Perez Balladares mentioned the possibility of offering Howard base to the U.S. Government free of charge to establish an international counterdrug-trafficking center.

In addition, Abel Santamaria, secretary general of the National Federation of Public Employees' Associations (FENASEP), has asked the Panamanian Government to abide by the Torrijos-Carter treaties. He also said the government should respect and obey the treaties signed in 1977, according to which the U.S. military bases should be closed in 1999. "Any actions of this type should be consulted with the Panamanian people. Nevertheless, we prefer that the Torrijos-Carter treaties be respected," he said.

Panama: Minister Hopes U.S. To Confirm Canal Official

PA1507011896 Panama City EL UNIVERSAL DE PANAMA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 36

[Article by Gerardo Berroa Loo]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panamanian Foreign Minister Ricardo Alberto Arias has said he is confident the U.S. Senate will confirm the new administrator of the Panama Canal, Alberto Aleman Zubieta, before its August recess.

According to the foreign minister, the confirmation of the new administrator of the interoceanic waterway is not delayed, but he admitted the process is extremely slow.

"Aleman's appointment is not behind schedule, but unfortunately it is a slow process, because the commission that is reviewing the case in the U.S. Senate is deciding if it will conduct a hearing or not. A decision on this

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has not been made yet, and we hope it will be resolved in the next few weeks," the foreign minister said.

The foreign minister said, however, that this appointment could be postponed if the U.S. Senate decides to call a recess in August.

"The problem before us is that the Senate will call a recess in August and could postpone or delay Aleman's appointment. I hope this can be resolved before the August recess," the foreign minister said.

Alberto Aleman Zubieta was proposed by President Ernesto Perez Balladares to the post of Panama Canal administrator after current Administrator Gilberto Guardia tendered his resignation to dedicate himself to personal activities.

Guardia became the first foreigner to manage a U.S. agency in its history. He was appointed administrator of the Panama Canal Commission on 20 September 1990 by former U.S. President George Bush. Guardia replaced Fernando Manfredo, who was there temporarily.

Aleman Zubieta is a civil engineer and is well-respected both nationally and internationally. He is president of the Urban Construction Company Inc. [Constructora Urbana S.A.].

Panama: Declaration Establishes Position on Canal

PA1307152996 Panama City EL UNIVERSAL DE PANAMA in Spanish 9 Jul 96 p A-5

["Text" of declaration signed by various Panamanian individuals and organizations in Panama City on 6 June]

[FBIS Translated Text] On occasion of the transfer of the Canal to Panama's full sovereignty on 31 December 1999, the individuals and organizations who have signed this document want to establish in this declaration, before the country and the world, their common position on the interoceanic channel:

1. The Canal, including the land, waters, and installations necessary for its operation, constitute an inalienable heritage of the Panamanian people, and, therefore, this channel cannot be and must not be the object of privatization and must not be subjected to any kind of international control by other states, a group of states, corporations, or international organizations or bodies.

2. The Panama Canal Authority Law must guarantee that the largest percentage possible of the income generated by the operation of the interoceanic channel be remitted to the National Treasury. Funds derived from this income will be legally protected for use in programs that promote the country's social and economic development giving priority attention to the needs of the least favored social sectors.

3. The Panama Canal Authority will administer the interoceanic channel in line with Panama's Constitution and laws which in no way will be a direct or indirect expression of foreign dispositions or laws.

4. As for the transfer of the Canal on 31 December 1999, the following contractual commitments must be met:

A) A definitive and complete vacating of U.S. military bases and strategic and communications installations by 31 December 1999 at the latest.

B) The delivery of military bases and training sites to Panama free of explosives and toxic materiel before the evacuation at the end of the century and the removal of such materiel from other areas of the national territory used by U.S. military forces. The United States must guarantee that the bases, sites, and areas can be used safely and risk free.

C) The delivery of the Panama Canal under efficient conditions and free of debts or obligations on 31 December 1999.

5. All U.S. military presence in Panamanian territory beyond 31 December 1999 will constitute a violation of the Panamanian Constitution and the contractual commitments regulating the issue and will not be accepted.

6. Starting on 31 December 1999, the security, protection, and defense of the Panama Canal, as well as the setting of tolls, will exclusively pertain to the Panamanian state, which will carry them out by exercising national sovereignty in compliance with international law.

7. All foreign military presence in national territory not authorized by treaties or the legislative branch is unconstitutional, violates international law, and will not be accepted.

8. The areas that will revert to Panama, including military, strategic, and communications installations, as part of the national heritage, must be reconverted to be used in civil projects triggering social benefits.

9. The General and Regional Plan for the Use of Reverted Areas, the Panama Canal Authority Bill, and the studies on Panama Canal alternatives must be made public and amply and fully debated, prior to their approval, by all sectors of the Panamanian nation.

10. According to the international law principle that all sorts of aggression imply the payment of an indemnification, we support the demands made by the victims

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of the 20 December 1989 U.S. invasion and urge the Inter-American Human Rights Commission to expedite the appropriate steps.

11. We ask the current government to start filing claims before the U.S. Government for all sorts of damages sustained by the Republic of Panama during the intervention and invasion from 1986 and on. In case there is no positive response within a reasonable timeframe, it must file a suit against this country before The Hague International Court of Justice.

These declarations are open to people and organizations that agree with the aforementioned principles and judgments.

Signed in Panama City on 6 June 1996.

People

Professor Julio Yao; Professor Miguel A. Candanedo; Marcelino Jaen; Professor Diogenes A. Arosemena G.; Nemesio Lopez Zapata; Belisario Herrera; Ramon Jimenez Velez; Professor Siemon Gonzalez; Professor Roberto mendez; Professor Manuel B. Garcia-Almengor; Professor Jose Eulogio Torres Abrego; Professor Victor Avila; Professor Humberto Ricord; Professor Raul Leis; Professor Egbert Wetherborne; Professor Hernando Franco; Norma Nunez Montoto; Professor Jose del Rosario Garrido; Professor Jorge Turner Morales; Professor Celestino Andres Arauz; Doctor Juan Carlos Mas Calzadilla; Carlos Francisco Changmarin; Professor Manuel F. Zarate; Professor William Hughes; Professor Roko Setka; Professor Rolando Hernandez; Professor Rolando Gordon; Belisario Rodriguez; Carlos Jones; Professor Eyra Marcela Reyes; Rafael Rodriguez; Manuel Duque; Professor Jaime Turner; Professor Jose Antonio Mathurin; Professor Josefina Zurita A.; Dr. Gaston Dormoi; Professor Anayansi Turner; Denis J. Chavez; Professor Virgilio Perinan Hernandez; Nibar Alvarado; Manuel E. Jaen; Jose E. Moreno; Adalberto Hernandez; Reynaldo H. Bermudez; Jose Alvaro; Maria Morales; Gloriela Bell; Avignia Miranda; Orlando Garcia; Andres Rivera; Marcelina Samaniego; Janio Castillo Candanedo; Mauricio Salinas; Miguel Paredes; Jose Colman; Edil Misael Penuela; Avidel A. Villarreal G.; Bao Rodriguez; Jorge Gonzalez; Alberto Petit P.; Polisoy Karicas; Jose Angel Rodriguez P.; Dayanara Caceres; Ornel Sanchez; Juan Pablo Navarro (Cinapode) [National Circle for Folk Poets [Circulo Nacional de Poetas Decimeros]]; Edearle Berrio Canto (Cinapode); Santos Diaz (Cinapode).

Organizations

Serpaj [Peace and Justice Service] Panama; Popular Nationalist Party (PNP); University Professors Committee for Sovereignty; Center for Latin American Studies (Cela); Single National Union of Construction and Related Workers (Suntracs); Transforming Thought and Action (PAT - Humanities School); Nationalist Forum; Patriotic Students Circle (Law School); National Sovereignty and Peace Council [Consejo Nacional de la Soberania y la Paz] (Conadesopaz); CARITAS [International Confederation of Catholic Organizations for Charitable and Social Actions] Social Pastoral (National Office); Independent Lawyers Front (FRAI); Students Convergence (Law School); Social Training Center (CCS); Students Renovation Project (Law School); El Chorrillo Small-Scale Businessmen Association; El Chorrillo War Refugees; Litigant Lawyers Association; Agro-industrial Sugarcane and Related Workers Union (SITACA); Writers Community; Vindicating Center for University Workers [Centro Reinvindicativo del Trabajador Universitatio] (CRETU); Ciri Grande Agricultural Union (Capira); Professional Mechanics Union; Our America Unity Association [Asociacion de Unidad de Nuestra America] (AUNA); Duiren Youths; Cinapode; Las Guabas Architectural Workshop (UP [University of Panama]).

Other signatures follow.

Those interested in signing in call 224-0618.

Panama: ARI Chief Backs Howard Drug-Base Offer

PA1207174596 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 2a

[By Wilfredo Jordan Serrano and Eva Aguilar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Interoceanic Region Authority (ARI) Administrator Nicolas Ardito Barletta on 11 July described President Ernesto Perez Balladares' proposal regarding the free use of Howard Air Force Base as an international center in the war on drugs as "beneficial."

The president himself confirmed that he had publicly and privately raised the proposal with the United States, with respect to the likelihood of setting up a drug interdiction center at Howard Air Force Base as part of a continent-wide effort.

Ardito Barletta believes the project "constructive and proof that the government is determined to help the United States and the rest of Latin America in the struggle against a problem affecting many countries."

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President Perez Balladares proposes that Panama "provide the facilities free of charge as part of our contribution to the war on drugs."

Ardito Barletta finds it "an interesting proposal that both countries and the rest of Latin America will hopefully consider."

Foreign Minister Ricardo Alberto Arias will meet with members of the White House Security Council, as well as Assistant Secretary of State Jeffrey Davidow, in the next few days. [names and titles of U.S. offices and officials as published]

The foreign minister has met politicians on the possibility of a U.S. military presence in Panama beyond the year 2000: The politicians said that the president had been hasty in proposing to the United States that Howard Air Force Base serve as a joint center against drug trafficking without Panama receiving any economic benefit in return.

Civic Renewal Party President Carlos Abadia pointed out that the United States could use the president's offer to maintain a military presence in the name of a center for the struggle against drug trafficking.

Ramon Morales Quijano, president of the Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement (Molirena), expressed amazement at the president's statements since they would seem to conflict with what the foreign minister had pointed out to this party with respect to no concrete joint-site offer having been made.

Roberto Cedeno, political commission coordinator of the Papa Egoro Movement, stressed that the party he represents remains steadfast in its position that the areas occupied by the U.S. bases must revert entirely to Panama and that negotiations will only be able to start after the year 2000.

Panama: European Commission Signs Accords With Panama

PA1407193296 Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 11 Jul 96

[Report by Atenogenes Rodriguez from the "Telemetro Reports" newscast — passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The European Commission for Latin America signed various accords with Panama today. The accords range from the development of reverted areas to the overall promotion of the struggle against discrimination against women. The European Commission says Panama has become its new channel of understanding with Latin America.

The European Commission is participating in the fifth meeting of the Committee of Independent Experts in Panama, the committee members of which will meet in Panama for two days to study the programs for the promotion of human rights in Central America.

During a breakfast with the media, the European Commission signed two cooperation agreements. The first one is destined for the overall development of reverted areas, support to the project for the City of Knowledge, and the universal congress on the Canal, as well as the use of reverted areas:

[European Commission leader Mendel Goldstein] "We will use our stay here to maintain contacts with the Panamanian authorities at the highest level."

The European Commission will talk with Panamanian officials about the future of the Canal and the incentives to attract investments in the reverted areas. The second agreement signed between the European Commission and Panama is aimed at continuing the campaign to promote the Office of the People's Ombudsman. The resumption of this project involves about $180,000:

[Presidential Commission member Irene Perurena] "This will allow us to continue publicity, promotion, and lobbying on the role of the people's ombudsman. First, we achieved the drafting of the law, and the law was submitted to the Legislative Assembly. We now wan' to conduct a large-scale campaign."

Parallel to the signing of these two agreements, President Ernesto Perez Balladares and the European Commission Director for Latin America signed an agreement to promote equal responsibilities with the objective of equitably distributing the people's participation between men and women, without discrimination due to their sex. The agreement includes financial support for the program:

[Perez Balladares] "Despair and unrest will rule as long as deprivation and discrimination prevail, and we cannot possibly achieve economic, social, or cultural progress like this; therefore, simultaneity seems to be the key. It is not morally or politically fair to force the less fortunate, in a social context, to wait long years, which sometimes become generations, before attaining a certain degree of material welfare, satisfaction, and cultural progress."

Anacoreta Correia, European Commission director for Latin America, acknowledged that a new phase has been completed between Panama and Europe with these agreements. It no longer involves cooperation. They are now partners in the new vision of Panama as a new window for world promotion:

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[Correia] "Panama is now a link between the Rio Group and Central America. I would say that, more than a link, it is a channel between South America and Central America."

The European Commission will meet for two days in Coronado, within the multi-year program for the promotion of human rights in Central America. The European Commission is carrying out about 30 projects in Panama.

Panama: Ecuadoran President-Elect Arrives on Visit

PY1307002796 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran President-elect Abdala Bucaram today arrived in Panama to thank the Panamanian people for their support, to meet with Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares, and to meet with investors.

Bucaram, who tomorrow will meet with the Panamanian president, will also meet with the mayors of the San Miguelito district, and of Panama City, where he was exiled on two occasions during the past decade.

The Ecuadoran president-elect, who was welcomed by Presidency Minister Raul Arango, will return to Ecuador on 14 July, after holding a meeting with Panamanian investors.

This is the first trip abroad Bucaram is making after being elected Ecuadoran President on 7 July.

Panama: Ecuadoran President-Elect Bucaram Visits

PA1407180396 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 13 Jul 96 p A-1

[Report by Jose Quintero de Leon]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran President-elect Abdala Bucaram Ortiz said in Panama yesterday that Peru and his country are lucky, because "one is governed by a little Chinese man, and the other will be governed by a little madman, the two of whom are good people."

Asked about the border conflict between the two countries, Bucaram said he regards himself as a man of peace although he has been persecuted, imprisoned, exiled, prosecuted, and has lost friends and followers violently. He added that it is highly possible for two friendly peoples to establish peace through dialogue and a concerted effort.

Bucaram, who described himself as a social democrat, fulfilled his dream of coming to Panama yesterday not as a political exile but, rather, as Ecuador's president-elect after two previous attempts at becoming president. Accompanied by his wife and relatives, Bucaram arrived at Tocumen Airport at 1435 and was received by a crowd of friends from all social strata who gave him a welcome different to that which he received at other times of crisis.

In the background, San Miguelito residents created a festive atmosphere with popular bands and folk music. Meanwhile, Ecuadoreans living in Panama, interspersed with the crowd, sang Ecuadoran pop songs accompanied by guitars.

Speaking for the reporters, he denied being a populist, as he has been described by his political enemies, and declared himself a social democrat, a believer in humanism, the principles of national liberation, the equitable distribution of wealth, and social justice. He added that describing him as a populist was a strategy of his adversaries to mete out the brains of his organization but that they have failed.

Nevertheless, he said he accepted the label because it was not offensive, just as he accepted the label of "madman," because "all men whose minds fly freely, who do not submit themselves, and do not bend are crazy, and history tells of great madmen, such as Christ, Solomon, Ghandi, Alfaro in Ecuador, and Arnulfo Arias in Panama. The world is full of good madmen."

Speaking of his plan to take his country out of its socioeconomic crisis, he said his country is very rich and very poor at the same time. It is rich because of the diversity of its products but poor because it suffers from a 35 percent illiteracy rate and a $30 basic monthly salary.

He promised "those who wear tatters" and "the mothers who give birth with their souls" a stable economy to exploit national resources. He also promised to seek foreign investment to provide health, education, and housing to those who live in dire necessity.

Economy wise, he said that he will not allow himself to be manipulated by big economic interests and that he will eliminate the monopolies retaining his country's wealth and impoverishing the majority.

Nevertheless, he favored privatizing state enterprises and permitting the private sector to prosper but, rather, with the caveat that it return its earnings to the majority of the people and create jobs.

As for drug trafficking, he said he will fight this "crime against mankind" strongly and directly, as well as the drug traffickers' "volatile capital" that does not create jobs. Along this line, he pledged to encourage sports, arts, and culture among young people.

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Nevertheless, he criticized the big powers because, he said, they combat drug producing countries but not those that consume it. He said this is disrespect.

Asked what he thought about Manuel Antonio Noriega, he said that he had no hard feelings for the former dictator, because he, Bucaram, had lived and seen enough, that hatred is a passion that leads nowhere, and that he feels compassion for Noriega.

He continued to say that Noriega persuaded him at one time that he, Noriega, had had nothing to do with the dirty trick of planting drugs in his car but that later he had found out otherwise.

Bucaram said he is very grateful to the Panamanian people for the help and understanding he received during a time of need.

Panama: Ecuadoran President-Elect Meets With President

PA1407233396 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 14 Jul 96 p 1

[Article by Vanesa L. Rosales]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran President [as published] Abdala Bucaram said at the conclusion of a meeting with the Panamanian president that Panama and Ecuador will establish trade relations in the fields of oil and bananas.

Bucaram met with Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares in the Yellow Room of the Palace of Herons yesterday.

The Ecuadoran president said at his departure from the Palace that both countries have many things in common, among them the marketing of bananas and oil.

Bucaram said he wished bilateral relations between Colombia and the United States were less tense, bearing in mind the struggle against drug trafficking.

In this regard, Bucaram said he regrets the situation between Colombian President Ernesto Samper and the U.S. Government.

Meanwhile, the Panamanian president said he hopes to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new Ecuadoran president, which will be held on 10 August, and said that if it were not possible for him to attend, he will travel to that country as soon as possible.

The Ecuadoran president-elect will return to his country today after holding a meeting with several Panamanian investors.

The purpose of the visit of the future Ecuadoran head of state is to thank the Panamanian people for their solidarity and support during his exile in this country as well as for the trust they had in him during his race for the presidency.

Panama: Commission To Keep Freeze on Public Spending

PA1207144596 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 9 Jul 96 p A-2

[Report by Wilfredo Jordan Serrano]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Fiscal Balance Commission [Comision de Equilibrio Fiscal], which is comprised by the Comptroller General's Office, the Planning and Economic Policy Ministry (Mippe), and the Finance and Treasury Ministry, has decided to keep the freeze on all public spending until the end of this year, a source at the Comptroller General's Office has revealed.

President Ernesto Perez Balladares in late April ordered a freeze on all public spending and instructed Comptroller General Aristides Romero to ensure that only "strictly indispensable" expenditures authorized by the executive through the Fiscal Balance Commission were made.

The source has said that the measure has yielded "positive" results and that the freeze continues on all appointments and pay increases, except for the National Police, the Judicial Technical Police (PTJ), the Institutional Protection Service (SPI), and the health and educations sectors, the last two on account of special legislations.

The source has said various government institutions have been asked "to cancel all the suppliers' bills for January, February, and March" in order to avoid the accumulation of debts.

In addition, all institutions have been asked to raise their level of revenues to the maximum by "reducing evasion and payment delays," the source added.

As for personal services, the source has said that all existing vacancies remain frozen, that changes in personnel organizations that entail salary increases are banned, and that contracts for temporary personnel will not be renewed, except in the Health and Education Ministries and the Public Force. The salaries in job contracts in the exempted areas will not be increased.

The informant has said the Fiscal Balance Commission has agreed to establish trimonthly "ceilings" in each government institution, "although on this occasion (July, August, and September) one has been more flexible than in May and June by establishing higher ceilings."

As for goods and services, they will be limited to per diem expenses and fuel, trips (except those financed by

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international organizations) will be curtailed, and the ban on remodeling offices and acquiring office equipment, leasing (equipment, cars, offices), and increasing current contracts remains in effect.

Panama: Decree on Reverted Housing Units Approved

PA1407233096 Panama City EL UNIVERSAL DE PANAMA in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p A2

[Report by Victor Dagoberto Torres]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Housing Commission of the Legislative Assembly yesterday approved an executive decree by which the internal regulations on the first options to purchase homes in the reverted areas located in the Atlantic and Pacific coasts are adopted.

The document, presented by the Interoceanic Region Authority (ARI), attempts to regulate the availability of the reverted properties destined for leasing and to determine the procedures to exercise the first options to purchase goods by implementing the social criteria stipulated in Article 43 of the ARI law.

According to this decree, in order to have this purchasing option, tenants must be paying their rents on time or must keep a payment schedule with the institution.

Legislator Abelardo Antonio explained that this document had the consensus of all interested parties and that ARI will have to make the pertinent assessments on what has been clearly stipulated, so that the Commission will be able to analyze them and give an opinion on the issue.

Panama: Police Uprising Head Promotes New Political Party

PA1207144196 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 Jul 96 p A-8

[Report by Sandra Alicia Rivera]

[FBIS Translated Text] David, Chiriqui Province — Former Colonel Eduardo Herrera visited the province this past weekend to promote a new political party to participate in the 1999 electoral campaign.

Herrera said his main objective is to be able to create a new political party—that is, the National Concord Movement [Movimiento Condordia Nacional]—to unite the Panamanian people.

Eduardo Herrera for many years performed his military duties as chief of the Chiriqui Province Police Zone. In December 1990, Herrera headed a police uprising that, according to him, was a movement to defend the policemen's demands, although former President Guillermo Endara and his aides affirmed it was a conspiracy to topple the president.

While in prison, he sent the news media statements on several occasions, charging that the government wanted to eliminate his family through starvation, because he had not been paid for several months. He was only able to receive payment after repeated requests. He was released in 1995 after being held for more than two years.

The former colonel said he is organizing this movement to group all citizens without political distinctions. "We want all Panamanians who want to participate in a political party in the next campaign to join us," he said.

The former colonel made those remarks during a visit to Chiriqui, where he met with various segments of the community to discuss the expectations of his new political party.

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Argentina

Argentina: European Extradition Petitions Worry Government

PY1207130496 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 7 Jul 96 p 10

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The government is preoccupied over extradition petitions and court requests filed in Spain, France, and Italy in the name of people who disappeared during the last military dictatorship. If the justice department resolves those petitions based on the Convention on Genocide — as the Supreme Court did in the case of Erich Priebke — and existing international legislation on human rights, Argentine military officers accused of crimes against humanity could be extradited.

On 4 July, as CLARIN anticipated in yesterday's edition, there was a meeting at the Olivos presidential residence to discuss the matter. Official concern increased last week when Spanish Foreign Minister Abel Matutes said his government may request the extradition of Argentine military officers if Judge Baltasar Garzon accepted the request by relatives of disappeared Spanish citizens.

Official sources stressed that the issue is not easy to resolve, considering the due obedience and amnesty laws. The problem is that during the 1994 constitutional reform, Argentina granted constitutional rank to all international treaties signed by our country. This decision includes international legislation on human rights and the Convention on Genocide, which allows the trial of people responsible for crimes against humanity even after 10 years and after those crimes have expired under the statute of limitations. [passage omitted]

Argentina: Menem on Camilion's Replacement, Arms Sales Cases

PY1307001796 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 12 Jul 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Carlos Menem on 11 July denied that he is reviewing the possibility of replacing Defense Minister Oscar Camilion with Buenos Aires Mayor Jorge Dominguez in August. Nevertheless, the president noted that Camilion's situation depends on a court ruling in the case involving the illegal arms sales to Ecuador and Croatia.

Menem told Radio FM La Isla: "Concerning the defense minister's case, it is necessary to wait for the judges to pass judgment. We are asking to speed up this issue." Federal Judge Jorge Urso has been investigating for more than one year the involvement of government officials in the arms traffic scandal.

Afterwards, Menem added: "I don't know where you get those unreliable reports." He emphasized that Argentine arms have not been sold to Peru, Ecuador, and Croatia. Nevertheless, Judge Urso has already confirmed that 5,000 FAL [Light Automatic Rifle] rifles and 75 metric tons of Argentine ammunition arrived in Ecuador last year during the war with Peru in the Condor Mt. range.

The president complained: "I don't see why efforts are frequently being made to remove ministers, secretaries of state, or under secretaries of state vis-a-vis this type of incident, before the end of the investigations. [passage omitted]

Argentina: ORP Claims Responsibility for Attack on House

PY1207204796 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Jul 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] The People's Revolutionary Organization (ORP), whose existence has not yet been firmly established, last night claimed responsibility, through an anonymous telephone call, for the attack perpetrated on 6 July against Senator Eduardo Menem's residence. During this attack, a federal police NCO was killed and another one was injured.

The existence of the ORP, as an armed group, has never been firmly established and most conjectures, both government and court conjectures, agree that it would involve a hallmark used by autonomous intelligence service groups.

Journalist Gustavo Silvestre noted last night that at about 2230 a man called the Todo Noticias Television "Duet" program manager and, after identifying himself as an ORP member, emphasized that this terrorist organization perpetrated the attack against the house of President Carlos Menem's brother.

Bolivia

Bolivia: Arrival of U.S. Military Medical Personnel Noted

PY1207131396 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 3 Jul 96 p A5

[FBIS Translated Text] The arrival of a group of about 30 U.S. military-medical personnel may not be taking place at the most opportune moment. It comes under circumstances in which the public feels susceptible to the antinarcotics Operation Laser Strike with the participation of U.S. military members that is taking place in other Andean coca producing countries.

This leads one to believe that the person responsible for the presence now of the uniformed medical doctors

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— and other experts — in Bolivia, particularly in El Chapare, has not made a good decision. This also applies to those who reported the news and claimed the arrival of the military-medical personnel falls within the framework of an annual routine visit.

Perhaps the U.S. Embassy should have reported a few weeks before the arrival of the group and explained who they are, what they will do, where they will operate, and when they will leave — and maybe when they will come again.

Meanwhile, we only know who they are and what they will do. The rest is subject to speculation.

We have many speculators in the country. There are even high level ones. A national deputy, who passed the "prime news" to a radio station on the arrival of the "American troops" — his words — to take part in Operation Laser Strike said that "as we all know" the laser rays the Americans will use will dry the earth making it unfit for any kind of natural life. Meanwhile, other reports from all parts of the country seem to give the impression that the 28 U.S. military doctors — and other experts — are all over the country. Nonsense. People see invasions where there are none. This is the consequence of not having chosen another moment, and of not providing better and more timely information on the arrival of the Americans.

Bolivia: Government Officials Reject Operation Laser Strike

PY1207190196 Cochabamba LOS TIEMPOS in Spanish 3 Jul 96 p A2

[FBIS Translated Text] La Paz, 2 Jul (ANF) — On 2 July, the Bolivian Armed Forces and the executive branch strongly rejected a tacit request by the U.S. Embassy to include Bolivia in a future stage of the military antinarcotics Operation "Laser Strike."

Acting Government Minister Hugo San Martin Arzabe reaffirmed on 2 July that "Bolivia has firmly and officially decided not to be included in Operation Laser Strike," thus supporting the position backed by the High Military Command.

In a public communique, USIS stated: "If any plan linked to Operation Laser Strike is developed in Bolivia, all stages should be duly coordinated and approved by the Bolivian Government."

The diplomatic proposal was not welcomed by the government and much less by coca growers and other political and labor union organizations. "This is an unnecessary operation, and we definitely do not need such a type of action in Bolivia," Defense Minister Jorge Otasevic told ANF [Fides News Agency], after a meeting with members of the High Military Command to discuss the issue.

Asked about the controversy stirred up and the misinformation caused by the arrival of 29 U.S. Air Force reserve and active duty military men aboard the U.S. Air Force-0489 flight, Otasevic stated that everything has been clarified and there is no reason to worry the people regarding the presence of the foreign military men.

Otasevic justified the decision to exclude foreign military men from Bolivian antinarcotics plans by saying that Umopar [Mobil Police Units for Rural Areas] and other local organizations are doing their jobs "with great success." He said: "Eradication is being implemented in compliance with the timetable, and even somewhat ahead of schedule."

Concerning the possibility of planning a stage of the Operation Laser Strike in Bolivia "with the Government's authorization," Otasevic said the executive branch has not received any official proposal on the matter. He stated, however, that the operation will not be carried out in Bolivia.

Bolivia: Sanchez de Lozada Rejects Operation Laser Strike

PY1207143796 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 4 Jul 96 Section 1 p 6

[Report by Martin Balcazar from Santa Cruz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Asserting that his administration will not allow "Operation Laser Strike" to take place in Bolivia, President Sanchez de Lozada said the participation of U.S. military men in drug enforcement operations could jeopardize national sovereignty and would be criticized by the population. He said he is against the Bolivian Armed Forces participating in drug enforcement, seeking to protect them from corruption.

Sanchez de Lozada said this in the wake of the arrival of a group of U.S. military experts, and reports that the antinarcotics "Operation Laser Strike" will be carried out in Bolivia.

On 1 July, 30 U.S. military experts arrived in Cochabamba to conduct search and air rescue operation, and aerospace physiology courses in La Paz.

Sanchez de Lozada explained that the experts are only providing technical assistance. He added that they carry no weapons and that they will not participate in drug enforcement operations, as announced in Peru.

Sanchez de Lozada said he is satisfied with the task achieved by the Special Antinarcotics Force, FELCN, despite its poor performance in the past.

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Sanchez de Lozada added that so far drug enforcement has yielded important results and major trafficking gangs have been dismantled.

Asked about the possibility of the Armed Forces engaging in drug enforcement with U.S. military men in the future, Sanchez de Lozada said it will not be necessary.

"There is no chance of that happening," Sanchez de Lozada said, adding that in the case of the Bolivian military men, it would entail involving them in cases of corruption or drug trafficking.

Sanchez de Lozada said U.S. military men actively participated in drug enforcement under Victor Paz Estenssoro's administration, but this will not happen under his administration.

Sanchez de Lozada justified his statements, saying that no treaty or negotiation foresees the participation of U.S. military men in the drug enforcement.

Bolivia: News Summary for 8 Jul

96CA0243A (Internet) Bolivian Social Communications Ministry WWW in Spanish 8 Jul 96 Morning Edition

[From the Computer Services Network of the Bolivian Social Communications Ministry http://utama.bolnet.bo:80/mcs/matind.htm]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

Political News [passage omitted]

Article 60 Accord

This will be a decisive week which will determine whether or not a regional agreement will be reached on the implementation of the Constitution's Article 60 and the redistribution of the 130 deputies' seats among Bolivia's nine departments.

On Wednesday [10 July] a final meeting will be held with the prefects and presidents of civic committees and parliamentary brigades to determine whether or not consensus, or at least a majority agreement, has been reached on the issue.

Bolivia's vice president, Victor Hugo Cardenas, who is in charge of working out this agreement, expressed optimism about reaching an accord. Any such agreement will be temporary, as a thoroughgoing constitutional reform is required. [passage omitted]

Brazil-Bolivia Border Document To Be Created

Trinidad. Within the next few days a special border identity card for use between Bolivia and Brazil is expected to be introduced. Both governments have demonstrated a strong interest in developing such a document, announced Bolivia's foreign minister, Antonio Aranibar, after holding talks in Trinidad with the Brazilian ambassador.

The foreign minister discussed this possibility during his speech at the foreign policy seminar which concluded on Saturday in Trinidad, the capital of Beni department. Ambassadors from five friendly countries were present.

MBL Corruption Evidence To Be Presented

Sucre. MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] intends to make public documentation which allegedly links MBL [Free Bolivia Movement] leaders in Chuquisaca department with fraudulent dealings with non-governmental organizations [NGO's], announced the leader of MIR, Jose Luis Carvajal.

He said that this documentation will be presented in Sucre, since Chuquisaca is one of the departments in which the partisan-political uses which the MBL has made of international assistance can be seen most readily. This international cooperation assistance is channeled through NGO's and is intended to be used for humanitarian purposes. [passage omitted]

Economic News [passage omitted]

Growing Shortage of Foreign Resources

Minister of Finance Fernando Candia again spoke out this weekend, warning that international cooperation resources are growing increasingly scarce, not only for Bolivia for but for all the developing countries. For this reason, greater efficiency in implementing projects will be required.

"If we are facing limited domestic savings and we are also facing an international context in which cooperation assistance will continue to decline, this makes it all the more imperative that we establish methods and procedures which will enable us to improve decisions about prioritizing projects and investments," he said. [passage omitted]

Bolivia: News Summary for 9 Jul

96CA0244A (Internet) Bolivian Social Communications Ministry WWW in Spanish 9 Jul 96 Morning Edition

[From the Computer Services Network of the Bolivian Social Communications Ministry http://utama.bolnet.bo:80/mcs/matind.htm]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

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Front Page News Briefs [passage omitted]

Pension Funds To Be Invested Abroad

The Pension Bill stipulates that 50 percent of the money saved in the reformed pension system may be invested in Bolivia. The other 50 percent will be invested abroad to protect the security of the resources saved by the contributors and to ensure the return on these investments, government sources told PRESENCIA.

Five Funds Omitted From Pension Law

The Armed Forces, Police, Judiciary, banking, and eight university insurance systems will remain outside the privatized individual pension system. The way toward approval of the new Pension Bill is filled with protests. [passage omitted]

Political News

Reforms To Be Accelerated

Yesterday President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, after a lengthy consultation with the government coalition, decided to accelerate to the utmost extent possible passage of the pending reforms, like the Forestry Products and INRA [National Institute for Agrarian Reform] bills. In addition, he confirmed that the Pension Bill, for which he also intends to press for speedy approval, will be sent to Congress today. "The coalition has decided to put all its efforts behind this, so that in the course of these next few weeks Congress may move ahead with all possible speed on bills on which a good level of progress has already been made, or on which in many cases consensus has already been reached, like the Forestry Products Bill and the INRA Bill," announced Minister of the Presidency Guillermo Justiniano. [passage omitted]

Bolivia: News Summary for 10 Jul

96CA0245A (Internet) Bolivian Social Communications Ministry WWW in Spanish 10 Jul 96 Morning Edition

[From the Computer Services Network of the Bolivian Social Communications Ministry http://utama.bolnet.bo:80/mcs/matind.htm]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted]

Political News [passage omitted]

Hyperinflation Without Pension Reform

President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada predicted a future of economic hyperinflation if the new pension system does not take effect on 1 January 1997. This bill was sent to Parliament yesterday.

This prediction was made in the memo which he sent to the president of Congress, Victor Hugo Cardenas, to whom he entrusted responsibility for the bill's handling and approval during the current extraordinary congressional session. [passage omitted]

Naval Force Under Investigation

Merely as a hypothesis, the Executive acknowledged on Tuesday [9 July] that some troops of the Fourth Naval District based near Lake Titicaca are being investigated in connection with the robberies in the Altiplano area of this department.

In a joint press conference, the ministers of government, Carlos Sanchez Berzain, and defense, Jorge Otasevic, made it clear that on this issue, "nothing has been ruled out," and they thanked the press "for informing us of a hypothesis that is under full investigation." [passage omitted]

Economic News [passage omitted]

Hydrocarbons Law Regulations To Be Approved

Soon the government will approve nine of the 22 regulations for the Hydrocarbons Law in order to facilitate the presentation of economic proposals toward the end of this month. These proposals are for the privatization of the exploration and operation and transport system units of YPFB [Bolivian Government Oil Deposits].

Speaking in a press conference, the national secretary of energy and hydrocarbons, Mauricio Gonzalez, said that the government is moving ahead in an "accelerated" manner with the approval of these regulations which are needed for the satisfactory execution of the Hydrocarbons Law. [passage omitted]

Bolivia: News Summary for 11 Jul

96CA0246A (Internet) Bolivian Social Communications Ministry WWW in Spanish 11 Jul 96 Morning Edition

[From the Computer Services Network of the Bolivian Social Communications Ministry http://utama.bolnet.bo:80/mcs/matind.htm]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt]

Editorials [passage omitted]

ULTIMA HORA

Antinarcotics Effort and U.S. Military Aid

Despite everything, certain military assistance policies are regrettable; while they have not worked effectively

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against the drug traffic, they have aroused the sensitivities of institutions, politicians, the media, the Church, and the people of Bolivia. Let us hope that there actually is no intention of conducting any experiment at the cost of saying that the coca plantations must be totally eradicated. [passage omitted]

Front Page News Briefs [passage omitted]

Pension Reform Will Be Expensive

Just during the first year that the new pension system is in effect, the TGN [National Treasury] will spend US $56 million to cover benefit payments, and the cost will rise gradually until the year 2008. Retirees continue to express their misgivings about the reform, while businessmen are opimistic about the new bill. The opposition is calling for not using a steamroller to force through the bill's passage, and the MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement] is offering to hold a major debate. [passage omitted]

Political News [passage omitted]

"Bankconnections" Statements To Be Expanded

The Constitution Commission of the Chamber of Deputies has decided that former banker Jorge Cordova and Minister of Privatization Alfonso Revollo will be asked to expand their statements on the "bankconnection" case beginning on Wednesday, 17 July.

This decision was made after evaluating all the statements and documents, especially the two letters which Revollo sent to Cordova and which were presented by Cordova as evidence of the accusations of influence peddling and extortion which he has made against the former treasurer of the MNR and present minister of privatization.

Social News [passage omitted]

Protests Against Pension Bill

The petroleum workers' leader, Samuel Soliz, has announced that about 3,000 active and retired workers have come to La Paz to express their protests against the Pension Bill and to take part in this afternoon's meeting.

"Workers from Llallagua, Potosi, Siglo XX, Oruro, and Cochabamba have come to La Paz to express their unhappiness about the new Pension Bill which practically repeals Social Security in Bolivia and attempts to impose a business arrangement that will benefit a group of businessmen," stated the union letter. [passage omitted]

Brazil

Brazil: Sources View Samper Visa Issue as 'Grave Precedent'

PY1207183496 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1741 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia, 12 Jul (EFE) — The Brazilian Government has declined to officially comment on the U.S. Government decision to revoke Colombian President Ernesto Samper's entry visa to the United States.

Various Brazilian diplomatic sources told EFE, however, there is "great unease" over the U.S. decision which they view as "a grave precedent."

Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia merely said the Rio Group — which has assumed the role of spokesman for Latin America — will study the case, and that Brazil will endorse the Rio Group decision.

Colombian Ambassador Mario Galofre has received expressions of solidarity from politicians and senior Brazilian administration officials.

On 11 July, the U.S. Government revoked Samper's entry visa because it believes he received money from the Cali drug cartel during his electoral campaign, even though the Colombian Chamber of Deputies cleared him of these charges.

Brazil: Cardoso Offers Support for Ecuador's Peace Effort

PY1307034596 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2321 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Quito, 12 Jul (EFE) — Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso today offered Ecuadoran president-elect Abdala Bucaram his "highest cooperation" in the peace effort with Peru, a country with which Ecuador maintains an historical border dispute.

After wishing him success in his mandate, Cardoso expressed "the wish of the Brazilian Government as well as of the guarantor countries (Argentina, Chile, and the United States) to continue rendering the two parties (Peru and Ecuador) all the cooperation and support, with my highest consideration."

In a letter sent to Bucaram and made public by the Brazilian Embassy in Ecuador, Cardoso also reiterated his "administration's effort to strengthen cooperation ties with Ecuador."

Ecuador and Peru are respecting a peace agreement established after a conflict in which they engaged

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between 26 January and 28 February 1995 over the sovereignty of a territory located in their common border in the Amazon region.

Brazil: Minister Challenges U.S. Protectionist Measures

PY1207142796 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 10 Jul 96 p 27

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia — Industry and Commerce Minister Francisco Dornelles is not worried over the risk of retaliations by the United States and Japan over protectionist measures Brazil adopted on cars and toys. He challenged the U.S. Government to discuss at a negotiating table the restrictions imposed on imports by the two countries, and guaranteed that the United States has imposed more trade barriers on Brazilian products than Brazil on U.S. products. Dornelles mentioned a list of at least 10 Brazilian products the entrance of which is prohibited in the United States.

He said: "I do not believe in retaliation. Safeguards are part of the international trade code and anyone wanting to protest over them should do so before the WTO."

Dornelles defended the import tariff increase on toys saying that it was a strictly technical decision. According to U.S. Ambassador to Brazil Melvin Levitsky, the subject is still under discussion:

"We are discussing the case of toys with the Brazilian Government within the WTO framework," he said.

Dornelles recalled that other industrial sectors asked for protectionist measures against wheat imports from the EU and against metallic magnesium from the United States, Russia, and the Ukraine. These petitions, however, were rejected because dumping practices were not confirmed in these cases. Pencil imports from China are being analyzed.

Minister Dornelles considers normal the arrival of American businessmen in Brazil to persuade the Brazilian Government. He recalls that between 1974 and 1979, when he participated in the preparation of the Compensatory Law Subsidy Code, he traveled more than 50 times to the United States to defend Brazilian products.

He said: "If they ask for a meeting I will bring to the same table the Brazilian exporters who face problems in the United States, and we will see who is victim of the most restrictions."

Yesterday the minister received another expression of support from the industrial sector to the safeguards. CNI [National Confederation of Industry] President Fernando Bezerra said the government is only using internationally adopted mechanisms to guarantee industrial competitiveness.

So far, no formal protest has been filed regarding the safeguards on toys or the automobile industry policy. Itamaraty does not know if Japan will file complaints against Brazil before the WTO, and reported that negotiations continue with a last round of talks scheduled to take place during the last week of July in Geneva.

Finance Ministry experts and Itamaraty officials say the restrictions do not affect WTO rules. They say the 70 percent import tariff on toys is within the limits accepted by the WTO.

Chile

Chile: Frei Terms U.S. Revocation of Samper's Visa 'Serious'

PA1407023996 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0024 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santiago, 13 Jul (EFE) — Chilean President Eduardo Frei today described as "serious" the U.S. Government's revocation of Colombian President Ernesto Samper's visa over alleged links to drug trafficking. The Chilean president, who just returned from a meeting with his Central American colleagues in Costa Rica, said this during a stopover in Iquique. Frei and the leaders of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Belize today protested over the U.S. decision and demanded that Colombia's constitutional democracy be respected. The Chilean president added: "We described this as an extraordinarily serious decision, especially since the Colombian president willingly subjected himself to his country's constitutional processes over many months." He said that charges as serious as those being leveled "should be presented to the proper organizations and the international community due to their importance and vast scope."

President Frei also discussed high-level talks he held with his Central American colleagues in Costa Rica and great business prospects with those countries. Eduardo Frei and a large delegation of businessmen, political and economic authorities, legislators, and intellectuals arrived in Costa Rica on 11 July.

Chile: Trade Negotiations With Canada Enter 'Decisive Phase'

PY1207151496 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 9 Jul 96 p B1

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Santiago yesterday, the Chilean and Canadian negotiating teams — headed by

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Juan Gabriel Valdes and Keith Christie, respectively — began a decisive phase by starting to discuss the essential tariff issue to reach a bilateral free trade agreement, which could later be integrated into NAFTA.

The meeting, at a downtown hotel, was also attended by Finance Minister Eduardo Aninat, who wanted to show with his presence the government's real interest in this bilateral agreement.

Aninat pointed out the importance of direct Canadian investments in the Chilean economy and indicated that work is being carried out for a first level agreement that involves not only trade but also services, investments, and opening and access to markets.

Aninat added that a bilateral agreement between an emerging economy — like that of Chile — and a great economy like that of Canada will show the rest of the continent that a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas could become a reality at the beginning of the next century.

Valdes said that Chile proposed during the negotiations an immediate 65 percent tariff reduction on all products, but agreed that some issues — like agriculture — need some fine tuning.

Regarding Canadian objections to the 30 percent legal reserve requirement enforced by Chile on external credits, Valdes explained that this issue is part of the chapter on investments, and that the objections Chile will present in the negotiations relate more to the powers of an autonomous Central Bank, and the practices that Chile has enforced on this issue.

Valdes added: "We must simply establish the powers of the Central Bank just as they are and explain them more clearly to the other party."

He said the agreement between Chile and Canada should conclude this year because this is what the president wants, and efforts are being made to fulfill it.

Negotiations between the two countries began last January and are part of the search for new markets in industrialized countries.

The average Canadian tariff is slightly higher than U.S. tariffs, and if the negotiations are positive, there may be concrete benefits for agroindustrial, manufacturing, and other Chilean products that enter the Canadian market with above average tariffs.

Chile: Navy Commander Views PRC Counterpart's Visit

PY1307011896 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 9 Jul 96 p C4

[All Chinese names and titles as transliterated]

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to a question on whether Chile's democratic system of government had been fractured on account of the events that led to the recent resignation of Judge Alfredo Pfeiffer, who was hearing the murder case of Senator Jaime Guzaman, Admiral Jorge Martinez Busch, commander in chief of the Navy, asserted on 8 July that the rule of law is guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Navy commander in chief said: "First and foremost, I never voice an opinion on cases which are being handled by the courts. I am very respectful of the judiciary and therefore, I have no comments to make."

Adm. Martinez Busch subsequently pointed out that one should not have any misgivings about the prevalence of the rule of law because it has always been guaranteed by the Constitution. He added that the Constitution clearly states the cases in which the rule of law is violated.

The Navy commander in chief made these remarks on 8 July following a protocol visit his Chinese counterpart, Admiral Zhang Lianzhong, made to Defense Minister Edmundo Perez Yoma at the Diego Portales Building.

Commenting on the visit the PRC Navy commander in chief is making to Chile, Adm. Martinez Busch said that this is part of the exchanges which are being undertaken with the navies of the Pacific Ocean — currently the most important ones in the world — in order to get to know each other better.

Adm. Martinez Busch explained that each time the SS Esmeralda makes a tour of the Pacific Ocean, it puts in at PRC ports. He added that this is why many young Chinese officers have become part of the training ship's complement.

Furthermore, the commander in chief confirmed that he will soon travel to the PRC at the invitation of Adm. Zhang. Adm. Martinez Busch observed: "There is an ongoing exchange of experiences which is quite important. We are one of the oldest navies in the world with warships already in commission in 1813. We thus have a lot to give to others." He went on to say that current budget constraints have also promoted greater efficiency in saving resources, which is seen in the current overhaul of the Navy.

The Chinese Navy commander in chief is accompanied by a high-level entourage comprising Vice Admiral

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Yang Yuzhi, commander of the East China Sea Fleet; Rear Admiral Gao Yuanfa, commander of a naval base; and Ship-of-the-Line Captain Zhang Yundong, Navy secretary general; among others.

Asked about the reasons for his visit to Chile, Adm. Zhang explained that they could be summed up in three points, namely the enhancement of mutual knowledge between the two navies, the furtherance of closer ties of friendship, and the learning of certain subjects of interest from the Chilean Navy that could be useful for the Chinese Navy in the future.

Colombia

Colombia: Samper 'Deeply Regrets' U.S. Decision on Visa

PA1207235696 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 2227 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Report by Gilbert Vega]

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking to more than 2,000 people who gathered at the Dario Echandia Plaza in Ibague waving white handkerchiefs in a show of solidarity and affection, President Ernesto Samper Pizano asked those opposing his government to leave Colombia in peace.

In a strong speech interrupted many times by the applause from supporters, Samper Pizano regretted the suspension of his U.S. visa but he celebrated the fact that the measure was directed against him and not against the entire country.

[Begin Samper recording] I deeply regret the decision adopted yesterday by the U.S. Government. [crowd shouts: No!] But I prefer that it was directed against me as president and as a person rather than against Colombia and its people through commercial sanctions. [end recording]

Samper Pizano warned that Colombia will continue to fight against drug trafficking, with or without approval. He announced a crusade against unilateral practices that only benefit drug traffickers.

[Begin Samper recording] Nothing or nobody will stop us in this crusade that we will begin today so that the world can understand that unilateral practices only benefit drug cartels that fish in the troubled waters of our problems. [end recording]

With the solution of waterline, sewer, and road problems for Chaparral, Ibague, and other municipalities from Tolima Department, the head of state affirmed that this was his way of fulfilling his promise to Colombia, adding that his presence in the land of Alfonso Lopez Pomarejo did not seek to elicit solidarity at this time or stir up nationalistic sentiments.

[Begin Samper recording] No Colombian needs to be challenged to defend his country, nor to be confronted to support his president. [end recording]]

The president reiterated his appeal for national reconciliation and extended an invitation to guerrillas to begin a permanent peace process irrespective of beliefs or ideology.

Colombia: Samper Urges Beginning Permanent Peace Process

PA1207235796 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 2202 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Report by Gilbert Vega]

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota — President Ernesto Samper Pizano summoned Colombians in Ibague today to close ranks to save the country. He gave a vibrant speech at the Dario Echandian Plaza, where he regretted the suspension of his visa by the United States and asked all those who are angry to submit to the reign of order and social justice.

[Begin Samper recording] There is no better time than the present to attempt to reconcile all Colombians. We must attempt to do this now when the sovereign rights of all Colombians are being threatened. Let us not make any more room for violence, conflict, or arbitrary solutions. From this plaza, I invite all who are angry to lay down their weapons and to submit, in these stormy hours, to the reign of order, social justice, and the law. [end recording]

President Samper Pizano invited all the sectors in the country to initiate a permanent peace process, which, apart from any consideration of interest [words indistinct] reasons of conscience, will allow Colombia to redirect all of its self-destructive energy to the construction of a new, peaceful Colombia.

Colombia: Envoy Says Samper Will Address UN in Sep

PA1207164896 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1354 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Telephone interview with Julio Londono Paredes, Colombian permanent representative to the United Nations, by Diana Montoya; Londono is in New York; Montoya is in Caracol's International News Center, in Miami; from the "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Montoya] The communique that was issued this morning makes it clear that Presi-

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dent Samper plans to attend the UN General Assembly in September. We have our ambassador to the United Nations on the line. Good morning, Ambassador Londono.

[Londono] Good morning. Nice to hear from you. How are you?

[Montoya] Mr. Ambassador, what do you think of the news regarding the president's visa?

[Londono] I was as astonished as any Colombian. The U.S. Government's decision is absurd, an [word indistinct] act against all of Colombia and its president.

[Montoya] Would you describe it as political pressure?

[Londono] The Colombian Government and the Foreign Ministry have already issued a communique expressing their views. I would rather redirect you to what the government has said on this particular issue.

[Montoya] What must be done so that President Samper can attend the UN meeting in September, considering that he has no visa?

[Londono] The United Nations has no problem with the president attending; in fact, the president is listed as the first speaker at one of the afternoon sessions. The United States and the United Nations signed a very important agreement on 4 August 1947, stating that U.S. federal, state, and local authorities (?will not hinder) representatives of UN member-nations from entering or leaving UN Headquarters. Of course, this includes the Colombian president. Article 4 of this agreement also states that the laws and regulations on foreigners entering the United States cannot be applied in violation of this agreement. The United Nations wants to secure every country's right to address other countries on its ideas, solutions, and views. This is a UN principle. On no account and under no condition can a representative of a UN member-nation — much less a head of state — be limited in any way at the United Nations.

Colombia: Daily on Revocation of Samper's Visa

96P20453A Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 12 Jul 96

[Editorial: "Samper's Personal Case" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a vote that was controversial but legal, President Ernesto Samper Pizano received, from Colombians, the visa to govern them for four years.

Today the country receives the affront that the world's most powerful country is closing its doors to the president of Colombia.

It matters not that the U.S. Department of State has said that this does not represent a problem with the Colombian people, but with Mr. Samper personally. The country feels hurt, humiliated, and like a new victim of a long history of interventionism in nations which are seemingly independent, but are subjected to the law whereby the most powerful rule.

With our minds focused on the way in which we have overcome the worst moments of our nation's recent history, the duty of all Colombians today is to remain calm and avoid emotional excesses that lead nowhere.

It is citizen Ernesto Samper, as an individual, who must confront the situation at which he has arrived as the culmination of a process which dates back to previous governments and internal cataclysms, unleashed, like AIDS, by the immunodeficiency syndrome of drug trafficking.

Mr. Samper decided to face all risks in order to remain in power and to fight to demonstrate his innocence. Today he faces the greatest risk.

On several occasions EL ESPECTADOR has expressed, through this editorial column, the view that this decision disrupted the country and that it was necessary to seek new channels of order and legality. Among them, a dignified and timely resignation by the president and a formula of national unity to rectify the evident failures and errors which resulted from the 1991 Constitution.

Today we again appeal to Mr. Samper's sense of responsibility so that in choosing the path out of the labyrinth into which he has been placed, he will put the interests of all Colombians above his own.

And we trust that, hand in hand with the resolution of [Samper's] personal case, will come an immediate show of unity and patriotism to preserve what little independence and liberty we have left.

Colombia: Editorial Urges President To Consider Resigning

PA1407000996 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 13 Jul 96

[Unattributed editorial; received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Many Colombians will remember 11 July 1996 as a day of sorrow, pain, outrage, and even tears; however, it must also be a time for moderation and restraint and a time for those of us who respect President Ernesto Samper and who are deeply hurt to control our tempers.

This is a difficult situation. The U.S. State Department's tough and insulting line flies in the face of protocol. It is

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shrewd in it attempts to make clear that it is concerned about Mr. Ernesto Samper and not the president of all Colombians or the people. U.S. officials express all kinds of respect and admiration for the Colombian people for the sacrifices they have made in the war on drugs. It is a shame that they fail to take into account that four Cali cartel leaders have been apprehended and another one killed under the Samper administration...but that's life.

We must wake up to reality no matter how cold and hard it may be and face the consequences of decisions involving the president or the government. We must exercise patriotic devotion and place the country over and above any personal interests; moreover, we must exercise this patriotic devotion with care, since we still do not know what is to come or if the U.S. position will change for the worse. The president must make the most important decision of the last few years and, of course, of his political and personal life.

Here is the dilemma: Should President Samper resign or remain in office? It would be difficult for him to try and keep the country out of trouble while in office, as there is very little that a president can do once he has fallen from grace. Such questions must be going through the president's mind.

This is a time for quiet strength; we must remain in control and avoid any outbursts, particularly with regard to the patriotic spirit that is mounting over Samper. The camps are becoming more entrenched: The opportunity to "feast on the president" is being served up with a savory bottle of California wine to those who hold him in contempt. All of this is as anecdotal as the position of those who believe the country should sacrifice itself for national sovereignty, which Belisario Betancourt described as "a concept recognized the world over that fades with each passing day, even if it directly or indirectly hurts those who still believe in the idea of nationality and, much more, in that of Colombia's nationality."

These are difficult times: This writer, who has had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout this country, cannot recall a time when things were more difficult or so charged with passion. This is why those of us who have supported President Samper with affection, loyalty, and even sacrifice want the president to consider stepping down, with the assurance that his return to private life and passing into history will be marked with the grandeur of historical decisions that truly mark the magnitude of all difficult yet far-reaching decisions. The country must look beyond its hatred and support the president no matter what decision he makes, be it inside or outside the presidential palace. If he decides to step down, then we must pave the way for him to return to civilian life with the dignity that he deserves. Ernesto Samper is far from being what many of his enemies claim: He is a great and courageous man, with a unique temperament that has allowed him to resist insults and attacks that few of our country's leaders have had to endure.

One note of caution: The president's resignation would not solve the country's problems or push Colombians into printing His Majesty Alfonso XIII's words "by the Grace of God" on our coins, as the Spanish kings do. They would have to read "by the grace of Washington" in our case, anyway.

The hard fact is that U.S. pressure, the result of an unbridled interventionist power with no counterbalance such as the USSR, will be unbearable. The old empire, which we all thought was able to control its egotism, is everywhere; State Department officials and its representative in Colombia — as autocratic as those outdated ambassadors of Roosevelt, the sneaky one — stand up for it. This is a fact. Like it or not, it is a reality that can be felt with each passing day and one that sets a distressing precedent not only for our country's autonomy but also for that of the American community, since the visa instrument promises to serve as the new big stick of U.S. foreign policy.

Colombia: Samper Responds to EL TIEMPO's 13 Jul Editorial

PA1407211996 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 14 Jul 96

[Text of letter by Colombian President Ernesto Samper Pizano to EL TIEMPO Director Hernando Santos Castillo — via internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hatogrande, 13 July 1996

Don HERNANDO SANTOS CASTILLO

EL TIEMPO Director

Dear Hernando,

As you are aware, throughout this case, I have strictly respected the media's right to inform people and give opinions on the so-called political crisis. I hope that even my detractors will admit that this attitude allowed even the most conflict-ridden issues to be publicly handled, without the apprehension that their concealment or distortion could have triggered.

I am breaking this golden rule to respond to the editorial you wrote today; I am motivated by the affection I have for the political and solidary manner in which you have faced the interpretation of the events linked to the crisis

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and by the obvious concern I have about the fact that the government's detractors are using the sincere statements of your editorial as another opportunity to weaken it or confuse those who support us.

First, I want to tell you that the dilemma you generously stated in your column over my permanence in the government or not is not alien to me. During all these months, I have always kept in mind my intention of not causing any harm to the country, and I have always put its interests above my own benefits. Had I acted for reasons of personal or family tranquility, my decision on the permanence in power would have probably been different from the one that has made me remain at the head of it.

I especially took into account this dilemma when the Chamber of Representatives made its decision to fully exonerate my behavior regarding events linked to the financing of the campaign that led me to the presidency of the Republic. As has been recently confirmed, I convinced myself that a transitional transfer of power would not guarantee a reduction in the polarization of society, let alone a peaceful solution to the crisis for all.

I made the decision to seek a reconciliation formula, on which I have been working through a number of proposals and legal and institutional measures that I will submit for the consideration of Congress on 20 July. Without any scene-stealing tactics, I have discreetly held throughout these last few weeks very positive talks with court magistrates, businessmen, unions, prelates, and spokesmen for the various political currents represented in Congress. With the exception of certain economic associations, I am pleased with the response given to the government's call for reconciliation and work.

The climate of coexistence we had been able to create was explicably altered by the U.S. Government's unilateral and untimely decision to revoke my visa to that country. This is a decision that, as the broad support I have received in the last few hours has confirmed, is unacceptable, not only because it intends to separate a democratically elected president's persona from his identity as chief of state, but also because it sets an unfortunate precedent, as has been shown this week, with the implementation of the so-called Helms-Burton law, regarding the fact that a country's visas could be used as an instrument to unduly exert pressure to intervene in a state's internal affairs or to somewhat alter its autonomous right to handle its international relations.

The "war of the visas," in which we Colombians have begun to be victims — and probably will continue to be victims — is the most arbitrary path a country could follow to separate traditionally friendly peoples, as is the case with the Colombian and U.S. peoples.

It is evident that, for Colombia, this revocation also disregards our state of law insofar as it is based on certain alleged charges that were analyzed and ruled on by the president's constitutional judge and on the government's alleged refusal to implement the legal extradition of fellow nationals, which Colombia's constitutional order peremptorily forbids.

However, dear Hernando, as your editorial rightfully pointed out, this action disregards the long and painful fight the Colombian people have had to wage against drug trafficking. It particularly disregards the efforts my government has made on this matter, efforts that such world authorities as the International Drug Board Commission have acknowledged.

I repeat time and again: Colombia is interested in maintaining good relations with the United States as long as they are based on due respect for the principles that guide the relations between two friendly peoples. Based on these terms, the foreign relations minister will devote himself to defining a new agenda in bilateral relations.

In light of these considerations, my dear Hernando, understand that it is impossible for the president to adopt, at this time and under these circumstances, an attitude other than keeping the validity of the state of law and preserving our condition of being a sovereign and independent nation. A different political development of these circumstances would confirm the existence of an interventionist plan to destabilize Colombian democracy.

This does not mean that today's dilemma, as well as yesterday's, continues to be valid until 7 August 1998.

Sincerely,

President ERNESTO SAMPER PIZANO.

Colombia: Senate Chief Discusses 13 Jul Editorial on Samper

PA1407011796 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1715 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Telephone interview with Colombian Senate President Julio Cesar Guerra Tulena by correspondent Orlando Cano Vallejo in Santa Fe de Bogota on 13 July — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been a wide range of reaction to the editorial in today's EL TIEMPO urging President Samper to consider resigning in light of the complex domestic situation. EL ESPECTADOR carries a similar editorial. We have been in touch with several politicians over the last few hours, including

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Senate President Julio Cesar Guerra Tulena. Orlando Cano Vallejo interviewed Guerra Tulena:

[Cano] Good afternoon, Senate President Dr. Julio Cesar Guerra Tulena. What do you think about the editorial in today's EL TIEMPO urging President Samper to consider resigning?

[Guerra] Honestly, I have only read the editorial once. I would like to read it again to get a feel for the exact context. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that the one who wrote the editorial — I believe it was (Edgardo Santos) — is merely making a suggestion that I am sure the president has received well and appreciates. Keep in mind that the president is the only one who can decide on such an issue.

The person who wrote the editorial also makes important proposals to the president and the rest of the country regarding the U.S. State Department's revocation of the president's visa. You cannot just focus on that part of the editorial that asks the president to consider resigning. There are other considerations that can be used tomorrow to support the president's decision to remain in office. The Liberal Party's national directorate will meet with the president next week to hear what he and each of the cabinet members has to say so that we can reach a decision on the issue.

I would like to repeat at this point in time that the president is the only one who can decide on this issue. Personally, I plan to support him in full no matter what he decides.

[Cano] What position does the Liberal Party intend to take during the meeting with President Samper, considering that the country is practically divided? The National Business Council [CGN] yesterday again rejected the Colombian Government's arguments on U.S. relations. We now have EL TIEMPO suggesting that one solution would be for the president to leave Narino Palace.

[Guerra] The position that the CGN took yesterday — and you know this better than I do — is the same position that it took days ago, when the problem arose. Their announcement is nothing new. You said it yourself: The country is divided in two. One side applauds the U.S. measure. We have to tell it like it is.

Those around Samper who are asking him to leave must remember that he, as head of state, must stand for national unity. You just cannot go around insulting all the country's institutions, like the ANDI [National Association of Industrialists] president is doing. This is unfortunate. He is not in the same position as Julio Cesar Guerra Tulena, who comes from a political background. He comes from a business background of production and productivity, on which many Colombian workers depend. He must be very careful with his statements. The CGN's position did not surprise me. Some business associations are even backing the head of state. You are right when you suggest that people should act with great care and caution. Without getting too nationalistic, I would like to say the we should all object to this offensive on our national dignity and feelings. There can be no business association division in this regard. There cannot be any political division because we are talking about Colombia's borders, as the Nonaligned countries have pointed out at the United Nations and as the rest of the Latin American countries will note. Today, it is Colombia; tomorrow, it may be some other country.

[Cano] Couldn't a real inability to govern complicate matters for the government in the future?

[Guerra] A great deal has been said about the country's governability. The government has been running the country. The president was in Ibague and Chaparral yesterday, opening businesses worth more than 15 billion pesos. We all know that the country's financial situation is not going through the best of times, but I do not think the United States, in its efforts to interfere in our country's affairs, will go to the extreme of cutting off foreign trade. The United States would be buried in an international avalanche. You see it with the EU, following the famous Helms-Burton law and its effects beyond U.S. borders. Governments worldwide would certainly be on the defensive if the United States were to go beyond revoking a visa and were to impose economic sanctions on Colombia.

Colombia: Samper Asked To Seek 'Rapprochement' With U.S.

PA1307023496 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Report by Fanny Estela Payares; from the "24 Hours" newscast; monitored from live relay by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision Television]

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic sectors have hardened their position against President Samper and have anticipated that the current crisis will worsen. They asked him to seek a rapprochement with the United States but without kneeling before it.

Business leaders have asked President Samper to seek dialogue with the United States but without kneeling before it. They announced they will travel to Washington to stop the commercial sanctions.

[Begin Maria Isabel Patino, president of Colombian Association of Flower Exporters, recording] He must

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try to get closer to the United States in order to talk, not to kneel. I repeat, to talk. [end recording]

Industrialists have warned that objectivity and prudence when commenting has been lost in the country, citing Minister Serpa as an example. They told him that it is best for him to work as interior minister and not as foreign minister.

[Begin Luis Carlos Villegas, president of the National Association of Industrialists, recording] The interior minister must devote his attention to the affairs of the Interior Ministry and not to those of the Foreign Relations Ministry, considering Maria Emma has not taken office yet. He should stick to his field or specialty, like he told business associations once. [end recording]

Once more, the business associations questioned the lack of credibility of President Samper and believe that his resignation is still in order.

[Begin Juan Manuel Ospina, president of the Association of Colombian Farmers, recording] After the ruling was issued, we don't see any conditions favoring governability under the president. [end recording]

They stated that the credibility of the head of state is not measured in public rallies.

Colombia: Interior Minister Serpa Uribe Interviewed

PA1207230096 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Interview with Colombian Interior Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe by Dario Arizmendi and an unidentified reporter; from "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Arizmendi] Interior Minister Dr. Horacio Serpa Uribe, good morning.

[Serpa Uribe] Thank you, Dario. How are you?

[Arizmendi] Did you sleep well after yesterday's events?

[Serpa Uribe] Not really, because the situation is very infuriating, and the outrage is too great. It is very upsetting.

[Arizmendi] Were you with the president last night to show solidarity? What did the president do last night? Who was he with?

[Serpa Uribe] I was with the president yesterday afternoon. Last night we discussed various issues on the telephone. He accomplished a number of things related to his executive functions. Of course, he received many displays of solidarity, many expressions of affection and support.

[Arizmendi] Will the president refer again to the Clinton administration's decision to cancel his visa, or did the communique read by Foreign Relations Minister Rodrigo Pardo state the administration's official position?

[Serpa Uribe] I am not aware of what is going to be done regarding that particular issue.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, yesterday you reacted vehemently against Vice President and Ambassador to Spain Humberto De la Calle because of the wording of his communique. You said that communique was meaningless. You said that it was a declaration that lacked dignity. You said that De la Calle's position was inconsiderate in regards to the country, and it seemed to side more with the United States than with Colombia. Did you consult such a determinant position with the president?

[Serpa Uribe] No, those are comments I made as [words indistinct] as minister. One cannot separate oneself from one's functions. Because, [word indistinct] the discontent regarding the declaration. In fact, it is a declaration made by the vice president before the Colombian Government's reaction was known. I believe this initial circumstance leaves much to be desired because Dr. Humberto De la Calle is, after all, a Colombian official. What occurred yesterday was an act of aggression against the president of all Colombians, a very inconsiderate attitude. In addition, one cannot reach a conclusion from the vice president's declaration. We do not really know if what he intends is to agree with the U.S. Government or to adopt a [word indistinct] position. I warned them. I believe that these circumstances must give rise to clear positions and transparent definitions [words indistinct] in the declarations of Dr. Humberto de la Calle.

[Arizmendi] Yes, one would have thought that after the vice president's last visit to Colombia a dialogue had been reestablished. I understand that Dr. De la Calle did not even call Dr. Samper after the U.S. decision was announced.

[Serpa Uribe] I don't think he called. My personal opinion regarding Dr. Humberto De la Calle has always been very clear, very respectful, and filled with admiration. Frankly, I don't understand this attitude of trying to sidestep the issue, to try to remain aloof from the situation, as if waiting to see what will happen. Dr. De la Calle's declaration announces more catastrophes, more sanctions against the country.

[Arizmendi] What would be the best definition, perhaps as opportunistic, or what other definition could you give?

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[Serpa Uribe] It seems to me that it is a very inconsiderate declaration regarding the head of state and the country. I believe that it is an extemporaneous declaration because of its hastiness. I believe that the vice president's explanation does not convey a decision, or a determination. That is why he has to...

[Arizmendi, interrupting] Make a commitment.

[Serpa Uribe] ...make a commitment. He has to say things as they are: Well, yes, very well; or I did not like that; or I praise that, or it was very unfair.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, we can almost hear in your comments as a private citizen and as a minister, that he should resign, that he should make official the resignation that I announced just a few days ago. At least he should do that, should he not?

[Serpa Uribe] I do not know. However, I believe the declaration does not befit a representative of the Colombian Government and ambassador to Spain. There is a clear relationship in regards to the official issue. This is not apparent in Dr. Humberto De la Calle's declaration. Yes, please continue.

[Unidentified reporter] Dr. Serpa Uribe, the U.S. State Department said that President Samper has adopted measures to protect and foster the interests of the cartels. As you are known for speaking bluntly, do you believe that statement equates President Samper with Noriega before the eyes of the world, or at least before people who are not aware of Colombia's reality?

[Horacio Serpa] That is absurd. What the U.S. Government is saying is mere speculation. It is an unnecessary way of attacking the president. This a very strong position intended to affect the prestige of the Colombian president which deeply harms the interests of all Colombians. The idea that it is directed against an individual but not against the interests of other Colombians is ludicrous. Dr. Ernesto Samper is the president of this nation. He deserves dignity from his friends, and profound respect from his opponents. The U.S. decision profoundly harms the interest of all Colombians. To repeat it is to disown our own institutions. The president of Colombia was tried in our country according to our laws, and he was absolved. Therefore, what the U.S. Government communique expressed is completely thoughtless.

[Arizmendi] Dr. Serpa, when President Samper's eventual resignation is considered, the possibility of Mr. De la Calle being an alternate solution to the crisis has always been contemplated. In the face of this declaration that unsettled you, and perhaps other persons, too, has the possibility of a De la Calle alternative been closed in the political arena?

[Serpa Uribe] What happens is that this possibility has never existed, and will not exist, but if it did, it would seem terrible to me. But this is not happening, and will never happen.

[Unidentified reporter] Dr. Serpa, the Narino Palace communique read yesterday by Rodrigo Pardo has been interpreted as some sort of challenge. I do not know how you interpret it, or how you could explain it. It says that President Ernesto Samper will be at the UN General Assembly in September, as if saying: I do not have a visa but I will be there anyway. Is this defiance?

[Serpa Uribe] No, it is not defiance. It is simply that the Colombian Government, and the president of the Republic, had already made this decision. Not only does Samper have the right to participate in those UN deliberations, there is also much interest in hearing him state his opinion on behalf of Colombia. In addition to this, President Samper is the president of the Nonaligned Movement, which comprises 113 nations, and he, as president of this movement, represents these nations, and the decision is to participate in those important deliberations in New York.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, you have said that the possibility of Humberto de la Calle becoming a constitutional solution, as established, if the president were to withdraw, has not been considered, and will not be considered by the president. Does this mean that the president definitely is there, and will remain there until the last second of the last day of his administration, that the latest decision and economic sanctions that practically were announced yesterday by Nicholas Burns will not make the chief of state change his mind, even if the country is destabilized, and has to endure undeniable economic harm, and the deterioration of its international image?

[Serpa Uribe] This is not an arbitrary decision. The president always has the Colombians' well-being in his mind. First, he has the right to exercise his post. Second, with regard to the inquiry he went through, he most clearly and openly presented himself to the corresponding process, and was absolved. And third, because the president withdrawal would bring a greater mess, problems, contradictions, and destabilization.

The president is governing, taking care of his duties. This is a very complex situation that represents many difficulties for the president, but he and his government will do whatever is necessary to overcome difficulties and offer to the Colombian people, to the governed, the best possible solutions.

[Arizmendi] What does the government of president Samper expect of the OAS?

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[Serpa Uribe] I do not know but I think we will have important international solidarity. Soon we will see that.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, in Miami there is an open suit because of the Cali cartel's financing of the Liberal Party campaign. Are the president and the Colombian Government not afraid that during that ongoing process President Samper could be called to declare, or that a warrant for his arrest could be filed through Interpol, and that his trips abroad could be affected?

[Serpa Uribe] That would be most inappropriate, unfair, and arbitrary. I do not think this can be done to the president. He already has been tried in his country according to our laws. But it is like we are reliving the days of the big stick policy. We do not know what kind of arbitrary action may be in the making, but this kind of situation produces more solidarity for Ernesto Samper in Colombia, and internationally, because we are talking about absurd and obvious persecution.

[Arizmendi] Can President Samper really govern in the face of the opposition of the world's most powerful country, and against President Clinton, who has clearly and in every way told him that they do not want him, and that all they want is for him to leave?

[Serpa Uribe] The president can govern because he has the support of the majority of the Colombians, and because there are other nations that are friendly to Colombia and continue to offer their solidarity to our country.

[Arizmendi] Yes.

[Serpa Uribe] I am sure, I am convinced, that this is true also about the U.S. people. This attitude does not represent, I believe, the position of the people of North America. This is the position of the U.S. Government, which is currently in an election period, and that views Colombia and its president as a useful tool for its own purposes.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, could the possibility of anticipated elections be considered, a little later on, as a means for pulling out of the total crisis in which we are immersed?

[Serpa Uribe] No, no, no. This has been completely discarded. Besides, Dario, observe: This has been brought up at a moment when the Colombians and the whole world were making efforts to try to reestablish these relations.

No one believes any longer the story that the Colombian Government is not struggling against drug trafficking. Not only has it struggled and has it had results that have no match in the world, but President Samper himself some weeks ago spoke of presenting to Congress alternatives that have to do with penalties, money laundering, seized assets, money produced by illegal activities... [pauses] We are working on that. This is a firm decision of the government that will be implemented.

But no, this had to be brought up, and the Colombian president had to be knocked, and the inconsiderate attitude we are questioning had to be adopted.

[Arizmendi] Mr. Minister, speaking bluntly: the United States evidently wants two things: President Samper's head and the extraditions. What possibilities are there of them getting one of these two things or both?

[Serpa Uribe] None. None because the presence of President Samper in the presidency has the backing of the Colombians, and second because the extradition matter is not a whim of Samper, but a situation established in our laws, a situation that has gone through debates. The president has called for debating the situation again, but the truth is that the government does not have the presentation of this to the National Congress as a priority.

[Unidentified reporter] Mr. Minister, recently there have been rumors about you leaving the cabinet. Could you delay this decision because of the new political situation? It seems that President Samper needs you now more than ever.

[Serpa Uribe] What President Samper needs to govern is his intelligence, his condition as a statesman, and the support of the Colombian people. He has already started to make adjustments. He has already told the country. He is going to continue adopting decisions on this until 7 August. The moment I have to leave, I will leave decidedly, but while I am in my post, I have to point out situations like the one I pointed out yesterday, not only with regard to the position of the United States, but also the attitude of some persons, which in this case must be known clearly. I am again referring to Humberto de la Calle.

[Arizmendi] Will the president demand of Humberto de la Calle a statement, a definite position, to see if he is on his side or against him?

[Serpa Uribe] I think the country is expecting this. This about the communique being meaningless is absolutely true. Read it carefully. Some believe that what De la Calle says is an exaggeration. Others may believe this is very appropriate, that he had cautioned about the situation, that now who knows what kind of catastrophe will hit Colombia, and that the president will probably speak about his delicate issue. He alludes to Congress' decision as if saying that many people did not like its decision, including the United States and many other

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people, but he does not take a stand. He does not say: I think this is important and the president of Colombia well deserves that, or: The U.S. position does not correlate with what the president represents.

This was targeted directedly against the chief of state.

[Unidentified reporter] Dr. Serpa, the country's labor unions and other sectors of the country have asked that Ambassador Prechette be declared persona non grata and that he leave Colombia. What does Colombia think about this, and what position will it adopt toward this ambassador who according to the State Department has to be the president's interlocutor for matters with the United States?

[Serpa Uribe] I think that personalizing a situation of this nature would aggravate it. I think that we have to analyze the total complexity and scope of the matter.

The situation is serious and quite delicate, but it will certainly not destroy the country. The Colombian people can overcome this situation. In fact, it has already prompted people to rally in support of their president. But for us to start calling out that Mr. Pedro or Juan... [pauses] I do not think it is advisable at this time. The situation is serious, but the Colombian people have become aware of the seriousness of the situation, and will overcome it. I believe that a way to do so is by supporting the president, and I invite the Colombian people to do so. Let us bear in mind that this action is aimed at showing the world that the Colombian people are pariahs, drug traffickers, and bandits. We are none of that. We are a country with problems, and there are indeed some undesirable people in the country. But we are fighting them, and the majority of Colombians are good people. They are honest people, who want to work for their future and that of their children. We must stick together in order to prevent that powerful nation from stomping us.

Colombia: More Reaction to U.S. Revocation of Samper Visa

PA1207202496

[FBIS Report] The following is a roundup of reaction to the United States revoking Colombian President Ernesto Samper Pizano's visa.

Samper Reasserts Authority — Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish at 1730 GMT on 12 July, during the regularly scheduled "National Newscast," carries a brief report on Samper's tour of Chaparral on 12 July.

Correspondent Anna Fernanda Valderrama carries a recording of what she describes as Samper's first reaction to the visa revocation, made in Manuel Murrillo Toro Park.

Samper says, to loud cheers and applause: "I do not need a visa to come to Chaparral! I do not need one to rule Colombia!" Samper adds in a later audio clip: "Here I am. I still rule here. I rule not only from Narino Palace or with anyone's permission. I govern right from the province."

Valderrama reports that Samper's words "stirred up a sentiment that the government itself had warned U.S. Ambassador Myles Frechette about several days ago."

A recording of an unidentified man in the crowd surrounding Samper is then carried, with the man shouting: "President Samper Pizano shall govern Colombia with or without a visa!"

Valderrama then reports on Samper's "prudent" response to Vice President Humberto De la Calle's recent communique, playing the following recording of Samper's remarks: "I have a golden rule: I do not hold public debates with government officials. This also holds true for ministers and ambassadors. I prefer to make observations, scold, or reprimand in private."

Valderrama closes the report by noting that Samper will meet with businessmen, church leaders, and politicians next week to continue work on the "national reconstruction project."

Ministers Postpone U.S. Visits — Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish at 1730 GMT on 12 July, during the regularly scheduled "National Newscast," reports:

"Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra and Justice Minister Carlos Medellin have postponed their upcoming visits to the United States next week, after the United States revoked President Ernesto Samper's visa. Esguerra's announcement yesterday, in which he explained the reason for his visit to the United States, was made before he learned of the U.S. Government's decision."

Armed Forces Back Samper — Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish at 1610 GMT on 12 July carries the following Santa Fe de Bogota- datelined report:

"The Colombian Armed Forces today reaffirmed their support for President Ernesto Samper, after the U.S. Government revoked his visa on charges that he is linked to drug traffickers.

"General Jose Bonett, chief of the Armed Forces Joint Staff, said that the military is loyal to the chief of state, who constitutionally is their supreme chief and to whom they owe respect and obedience. The officer said that Samper's visa revocation cannot influence the

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military's position. He explained: 'We must continue fulfilling our duty of maintaining national security without intervening in politics.' Bonett said that in Colombia there is no longer any room for coup d'etats because this has never been the spirit of the military institute. He explained: 'A coupist adventure would be suicidal because Colombia has no experience with coups because it is a totally civilian country.' He noted: 'The military forces have never had to meddle in such problems. If we were to do it now, we would become part of the problem and this would make matters worse for the country.' Gen. Bonett insisted that the military backs the president in full. He stated: 'He is our commander. The Constitution says he is the supreme chief of the Armed Forces and we cannot surge out of that avenue.'

"It has been reported that other military commanders, including National Police Director General Rosso Serrano, have called the president to express their solidarity and guarantee their loyalty and wish to continue working for Colombia's security."

Narino Palace Communique — Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish on 12 July, monitored via Internet, carries the communique that Narino Palace issued on 11 July in response to the revocation:

"Following the U.S. Government's revocation of President Ernesto Samper's visa today, the Colombian Government hereby declares:

"1. Colombia and the Colombian people are disturbed over this unilateral and interventionist measure, which fails to take into account the Colombian people's efforts to fight drug trafficking and the president's constitutional right to stand for the nation's unity and sovereignty.

"2. The U.S. Government has no respect for the Colombian legal system. The Colombian legal system has maintained a high public profile throughout investigations into presidential campaign funding and President Samper's conduct. The Chamber of Representatives, in no uncertain terms, recently cleared the president of all charges. The Constitution states that this is the only body fit to judge the president.

"3. This brand of foreign policy is unacceptable and sets a serious interventionist precedent.

"4. These kinds of decisions in no way help the world in its struggle to arrest criminal drug trafficking organizations and imprison drug traffickers, like those members of the Cali cartel who have been imprisoned during the Samper administration. Colombia will continue waging a determined struggle against drug trafficking with or without help and without any foreign pressure. Colombia reiterates the need to summon the international community's solidarity on an issue that cannot be dealt with unilaterally and to which President Samper will refer during the UN General Assembly in September.

"Narino Palace"

Vice President Consults Minister on Reactions — Madrid EFE in Spanish at 1808 GMT on 12 July carries the following Santa Fe de Bogota-datelined report:

"Humberto de la Calle, Colombian vice president and ambassador to Spain, today asked Interior Minister Horacio Serpa to 'tone down his response' to the U.S. decision to revoke President Ernesto Samper's visa. De la Calle said: 'It is not convenient to use aggressive statements that open new avenues of conflict that have direct repercussions on the national economy.' The vice president issued a communique on 11 July, separating himself from the rest of the Colombian Government by characterizing the suspension of the visa that allowed Samper to enter the United States as 'very grave.'"

Samper 'Faring Poorly' With Press — Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish at 1730 GMT on 12 July, during the regularly scheduled "National Newscast," reports on Colombian press reaction to the revocation.

The announcer leads: "Opinions are divided on the U.S. revoking President Ernesto Samper's visa. Although Samper is winning support, he is faring poorly with the press. Editorials published in some of the country's most influential newspapers today have again called for his resignation."

Correspondent Hernando Salazar then reports: "Medellin EL COLOMBIANO says it would be irresponsible to wave the often opportunist and misunderstood nationalist flag, because the U.S. decision is aimed at the president and not the Colombian people. Samper should have resigned, even when it appeared that the decision would be free and magnanimous. However, he should do so now despite everything.

"Bogota's EL ESPECTADOR editorial recalled that it had in the past suggested a dignified and opportune manner for Samper to step down. It adds: Today, we again appeal to Samper's sense of responsibility and urge him to put the interests of the Colombian people before his own as he ponders a way out of the labyrinth in which he finds himself.

"EL NUEVO SIGLO says that as long as Samper remains in office, the nation's domestic and international image will be further undermined. The editorial adds that the country cannot wrap itself in the flag so that

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Samper and his friends can continue reaping the benefits of power.

"Cali EL PAIS, which has before asked for Samper's resignation, says that the only antidote for international discredit is a decent and respectable administration, which Colombia now lacks."

More on Press Reaction — Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish at 1351 GMT on 12 July carries the following Santa Fe de Bogota-datelined report:

"The local press noted that U.S. interventionism has hurt and humiliated Colombia tremendously, following the revocation of President Ernesto Samper's visa. All Colombian newspapers devoted at least 25 percent of their coverage to the U.S. State Department's decision to bar President Samper from entering U.S. territory. Radio and television newscasts also focused on the decision, airing news and analytical reports, interviews with various Colombian personalities, and predictions on the future of U.S.-Colombian relations.

"The headline on the influential EL TIEMPO read: 'The United States Closed Its Door on Samper.' It stressed that the United States is suggesting that Samper's policies are designed to protect drug traffickers through its decision to revoke his visa.

"EL ESPECTADOR carried front-page report on official reaction and maintained that 'the country is hurt, humiliated, and a victim of interventionism' in a case that Colombians do not view as President Samper's personal business but as the entire country's.

"The headline on the opposition LA PRENSA read: 'Ernesto Samper...Noriega.' It said that the United States is giving the Colombian president "the status of drug trafficker" and compares his case with that of former Panamanian dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega.

"EL DIARIO, owned by the family of former President Misael Pastrana (1970-74), said in its editorial that Samper 'has become an outcast on Earth.' A member of the Pastrana clan ran against Samper in the political campaign that won him the presidency in 1994. This newspaper added that the U.S. ruling falls in line with the reality that drug trafficking is pretty much alive in Colombia and has not been properly countered by the executive branch.

"Cali OCCIDENTE categorically underscored that 'Samper was stripped of his U.S. visa' and after rounding up the opinions of various prominent Colombians, it expressed 'shock and outrage' over the Clinton administration's decision.

"LA REPUBLICA, a publication on economic issues, devoted ample coverage to an analysis of the implications the revocation of the president's visa will have for the country, particularly in the monetary and business areas.

"The electronic media also reviewed the manner in which radio and television stations worldwide have been covering the news and the negative impact that it has had on the battered Colombian image."

Public Rejects U.S. 'Meddling' in Affairs — Madrid EFE in Spanish at 1427 GMT on 12 July carries the following Santa Fe de Bogota-datelined report:

"Most Colombians are condemning the United States for revoking President Ernesto Samper's visa and believe that this measure constitutes U.S. meddling in Colombia's internal affairs and a violation of the entire country. These were the results of a poll conducted on 11 July, following the U.S. State Department's announcement that it had barred President Samper from entering U.S. territory.

"EL ESPECTADOR published the results today, showing that 59 percent of those polled consider this measure a violation of the country and not just President Samper. A total of 38 percent believe this U.S. measure is a violation of the president. A total of 65 percent of those polled believe that the Clinton administration's decision to revoke Samper's visa was not called for, compared to 32 percent who think the contrary. A total of 65 percent condemn the U.S. decision, while 33 percent approve.

"A total of 68 percent of those polled described this measure as U.S. meddling in the country's internal affairs; 28 percent did not view it as such; 4 percent view it as a legitimate action by the U.S. Government.

"The poll was conducted by the National Consulting Center at the request of EL ESPECTADOR and the television newscast "CM&." This poll comprised a sample of 500 people in Santa Fe de Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Barranquilla and Bucaramanga, the leading cities in Colombia."

Colombia: Regional Reaction to U.S. Decision on Samper

PA1307023596 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2323 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 12 Jul (NOTIMEX) — The unusual measure to cancel the U.S. entry visa to Colombian President Ernesto Samper has been broadly questioned in different countries of Latin America.

Cuban official media sources have criticized the decision of the U.S. Government to cancel the visa to the Colombian president, under the assumption that he is

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connected to drug trafficking in that South American country.

A commentary of the Cuban state-owned television indicated that this case reminds everyone about similar decisions adopted by the White House against Libyan President Muammar al-Qadhdhafi, Palestine leader Yasir Arafat, and Cuban President Fidel Castro.

The television broadcast compared this situation with that of a boy who "picks up bats and balls and prohibits his friends from visiting his home" if they contradict him, and said that the United States "is being left alone" after noting the rejection of several countries to this measure.

The commentator compared this case with the provisions of the Helms-Burton law which will ban executives, shareholders, and relatives of firms that profit from properties confiscated from U.S. citizens in Cuba after 1959 from entering the United States.

The daily GRANMA today published a red-lettered headline entitled "Interventionist U.S. Attitude," containing an international report on the reaction of the Colombian Government to the U.S. decision announced by U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

The National Radio Newscast (NNR) also had a headline on the subject, while Colombian Ambassador to Cuba Miguel Antonio Yepes, who was interviewed by the television, accused the U.S. Government of meddling in the internal affairs of his country.

The diplomat affirmed that the Colombian people are "annoyed with this type of unilateral measure which adversely affects the sovereignty of our country" and are trying to disavow "the great effort being made by Colombia in the struggle against" drug trafficking.

In Caracas, the Venezuelan Government regretted the cancellation of the U.S. visa to the Colombian President, according to a communique from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A short communique states that "the revocation of a visa is a sovereign act of a state that we could not judge, but we regret what happened to the president of Colombia because he is not a common citizen but a head of state."

In the meantime, major Venezuelan newspapers carried front-page reports on the U.S. Government decision, which further deteriorates bilateral relations between Colombia and the United States.

"Clinton took away the visa from Ernesto Samper... Colombian president accuses the United States of interventionism... The United States revoked the visa to Samper over his ties with drug trafficking," were the headlines of dailies EL NACIONAL and EL UNIVERSAL.

The Colombian Embassy in Caracas has delivered to the media the official communique of the Samper Government rejecting the decision of Washington for its interventionist nature.

Officials from the Colombian Embassy in Caracas expressed concern over the revocation of the visa to Samper, and asserted that "this will affect us a great deal and we don't know what is going to happen."

Different diplomats privately commented that the decision of Washington was "wrong, hasty, and foolish" because it is fueling the Colombians' nationalistic sentiment.

Local analysts believe that the measure adopted by Washington against Colombia has "serious implications for Latin America" and some people have not ruled out the possibility that the military, together with economic sectors, may seek to overthrow Samper.

Academician Rafael Zuleda has said that the U.S. position may endanger the security and stability of the American continent.

In Panama, the editorial of the morning daily "LA PRENSA" said that the cancellation of the U.S. visa to Colombian President Ernesto Samper will bring "devastating effects on the economy" of that nation.

Although the news on the cancellation of Samper's visa was on the front pages of local dailies, "LA PRENSA" devoted its editorial to the issue and stated that the South American president must soon resign the post that he won democratically.

"Regardless of the responsibility that Samper may have on this issue, on the contributions of drug trafficking groups to his campaign, the undeniable political event is that he is no longer suitable for the post of president of Colombia and he must understand this," the newspaper expressed.

According to the editorial, if Samper continues "to maintain an unsustainable position, he may cause a disruption in constitutional order with sad consequences for the political future of Colombia, and unpredictable regional repercussions."

"The greatest contribution that he could make to his country is to acknowledge this and resign. It is a difficult decision but the longer he waits to adopt it, the worse the consequences will be for Samper and for that country," the editorial concluded.

In Lima, analysts said that the U.S. decision to ban Colombian President Ernesto Samper from entering

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this country is part of the electoral strategy of the government of William Clinton to show an allegedly strong stand on the drug struggle.

Diego Garcia Sayan, president of the Andean Jurists Commission (CAJ), and UN Rapporteur Enrique Bernales affirmed that the revocation of the visa to Samper is intended to force his resignation from the presidency of Colombia.

Garcia Sayan stressed that Washington's ban to prevent Samper from entering U.S. territory is part of the electoral strategy of Clinton "to demonstrate alleged strength in the so-called war against drug trafficking."

Bernales considered the measures adopted by the U.S. Administration inappropriate, although he admitted that it has the right to decide who does and who doesn't get into U.S. territory.

He indicated that international relations between countries "are measured with other criteria." Consequently, he considered "that the United States is forcing Samper's resignation, but the methods are totally wrong."

In the meantime, Colombian Ambassador to Peru Luis Guillermo Grillo Larte denied that the U.S. measure will promote a coup d'etat in his country, although he recognized that it may cause a dangerous internal movement in Colombia.

He stated that a possible resignation of Samper would be inappropriate, because the visa revocation "has stirred up Colombian nationalism and united all social and political forces, which are enraged over the U.S. sanction.

"The important thing is not whether President Samper has a visa or not, but the respect that must exist for the principles of law, such as nonintervention and the establishment of respect between countries," the diplomat expressed in statements to a local radio station.

He underscored that the end of the "Cold War" must further unite countries and not separate them. "Let us hope that the times in which some countries named and removed people have been definitely overcome," the envoy concluded.

Colombia: Constitutional Court President Defends Legal System

PA1207161096 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 12 Jul 96

[Interview with Constitutional Court President Dr. Carlos Gaviria Diaz by Dario Arizmendi; place not given; from the "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Arizmendi] What does Constitutional Court President Dr. Carlos Gaviria Diaz think about the Clinton administration's decision to revoke President Ernesto Samper Pizano's visa? Good morning, Dr. Gaviria.

[Gaviria] Good morning, Dario. I want to make a couple of things clear before I comment: first, my own personal views are in no way meant to reflect those of the organization that I head; second, I will comment on the President's decision as a law professor and not as someone whom this decision could affect. I have been a law professor all my life; this qualifies me to be a magistrate. It seems to me that the decision not only discredits the Colombian president — this is the conclusion that can be drawn on first examination — but also smacks of contempt for the entire Colombian legal system. Why? The truth of the matter is that the Chamber of Representatives cleared the president of any charges. The president did not call for the investigation: The Colombian Constitution called for the investigation, which a president must be subjected to when charges such as those levied against President Samper are levied. The decision may be questioned; I know that some Colombians reject this decision; however, the law — which every civilized society must have — also allows for presenting these types of arguments. A group of citizens of the highest ethical and intellectual caliber either intend to expose or have already exposed [denunciar] representatives for breach of official duty [prevaricato]. If the representatives are convicted of breach of official duty, then we may conclude that the case against President Samper was pointless [una miseria]. The Colombian Constitution clearly states that these representatives are entitled to the presumption of innocence until a ruling is handed down. These representatives were elected to office via an electoral process laid out in the Colombian Constitution. From that point of view, what has taken place here is completely beyond reproach, until a different conclusion is reached. I learned about due process and respecting a judge's ruling, during my years as a law student both here and at Harvard. The United States also holds these principles very dear.

[Arizmendi] Yes. Dr. Gaviria, having said that, even though you specified that you spoke exclusively in

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your own name, do you plan to propose before the Constitutional Court in full — I believe that the same should be done with the National Congress — that a public announcement be made on the U.S. Government decision's effects?

[Gaviria] Dario, my colleagues and I will consider the relevance of such an announcement. I cannot say that my colleagues agree with me. What I am saying is that this is truly serious for the reasons I explained.

[Arizmendi] Of course. Would you advise the Colombian president to appeal to multilateral organizations, such as the OAS, to study the situation? Perhaps the OAS itself could demand that President Clinton present the evidence that he claims to have, with regard to President Samper, drug money, and the presidential campaign?

[Gaviria] I cannot say how appropriate that would be at this time. The United States could be basing its decision on word that it has received either through its intelligence services or from who knows what official that the president is guilty of certain things. Consider the timing of this decision: Right after the Chamber of Representatives goes through the constitutional motions and clears the president, the government announces — I do not believe that there has been no official announcement yet — that it cannot honor U.S. extradition requests. The Colombian Constitution forbids the government from turning over these people. The U.S. Government finds sentences handed down here too mild, particularly in the cases of those who were convicted of drug trafficking in Cali and Medellin who have been or are about to be released. Colombian judges sentenced these people under Colombian law. There is no way to determine whether the prison term fits the crime, whether someone convicted on felony [delito] charges should serve five or six years, three consecutive sentences plus 131 years, etc. The sentences are handed down under Colombian law; therefore, what has happened is nothing more than the normal work by Colombian institutions. This cannot be questioned by another country, no matter how much more powerful, wealthy, or technologically developed it may be.

Colombia: Rights Forum Declares U.S. Envoy Persona Non Grata

PA1407013296 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Permanent Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Colombia [Comite Permanente por la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos de Colombia] demanded at the end of its three-day conference on 13 July that an investigation be carried out to identify those responsible for the deaths of 3,000 members of a leftist party.

It also declared U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Myles Frechette persona non grata.

Participants in the forum want a commission to investigate and identify those responsible for the genocide of Patriotic Union [UP] members.

A statement was issued following the Seventh Conference on Peace, Democracy, Justice, and Development in Colombia blaming the complex national crisis on drug trafficking, which it describes as a form of organized crime that has seeped into the country's political and economic system. Participants said that the ban on drugs and the United States, which has been its most obsessive promoter, have historically been at the root of the problem. The delegates accused the United States of using this ban to violate Colombian sovereignty and Frechette of meddling in Colombia's domestic affairs.

Forum delegates described the crimes committed against the UP as serious and systematic human rights violations.

Colombia: Commander Denies U.S. Revoked Military Men's Visas

PA1407042396 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2154 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 13 Jul (NOTIMEX) — Army Commander General Harold Bedoya today denied a report broadcast on 12 July that the U.S. Government has revoked the visas of seven Colombian military men.

A report that Interior Minister Horacio Serpa's visa has been revoked was carried during the same local television newscast.

The reports were aired two days after the State Department revoked Colombian President Ernesto Samper's visa. Chile, Cuba, and several Central American countries, among others, have protested the move. The United States explained that Samper's visa was revoked after it found sufficient evidence that drug trafficking mafias had filtered money into Samper's 1994 presidential campaign.

Bedoya said in Bucaramanga that he has official documents proving that the United States has not revoked the visas of any military men and that, in light of this, the "CM&" news report "makes no sense."

Military Forces Commander Admiral Holdan Delgado said in Cali that although he has no information on this matter, "it would cause great concern if it turned out to

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be true." As for Samper's situation, the officer said in a firm tone that the military forces support the country's institutions, including the presidency of the republic, "as mandated by the Constitution."

Top leaders of Colombia's armed services issued a joint communique on 12 July, stating that the constitutional forces believe that "solutions will always be found within the framework of the legal state and through understanding and prudent actions." They also urged the citizens to help overcome the difficulties facing the country stemming from the conflict with the United States.

Interior Minister Horacio Serpa has not commented on the "CM&" report that his U.S. visa has also been revoked. Serpa harshly criticized Washington for revoking Samper's visa, describing the measure as amazing, meddlesome, and insensitive.

Colombia: Envoy to Panama on Possible Break in Ties With U.S.

PA1307180996 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 13 Jul 96 p 2

[Report by Diamar Aparicio B.]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colombian Ambassador Alfonso Araujo Cotes yesterday did not discard the possibility of Colombia "breaking" diplomatic relations with the United States for canceling President Ernesto Samper's visa even though this action is "unfair, arbitrary, and unilateral."

Araujo Cotes said the Colombian Government will present its case to the United Nations so this organization may study the situation and so the truth may be known. The case also will be presented to the Rio Group and the OAS.

Araujo Cotes affirmed that "the government will adopt measures and is preparing its case so the truth about what is happening in the country may be known."

The ambassador said Colombia is expecting a joint resolution from all the countries of Latin America and the world to change the status in which the United States has placed Colombia.

Araujo said that the possibility of Colombia breaking diplomatic relations with the United States has not been discarded but that the entire Colombian Government would adopt this decision.

He said: "This problem is not a personal one of Mr. Samper but, rather, a problem of international scope that requires the support of all the countries."

He believes, however, the situation will not produce any military reaction from either of the two countries.

The U.S. Government on 11 July canceled President Ernesto Samper's visa alleging that he has relations with drug traffickers.

Meanwhile, former Panamanian Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Guevara has said this "drastic" measure has "surprised" him, because Colombian President Ernesto samper has adopted radical measures against drug traffickers.

He has said: "I believe Samper is one of the most successful Colombian presidents in the struggle against drug trafficking."

He has said that he personally believes Samper has had ties with drug trafficking, that this took place, however, before he became president, and that he has fought traffickers from this position.

Colombia: Armed Forces Commanders Call For Unity

PA1307023996 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 0012 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota — The Colombian Armed Forces urged their members to remain united in order to guarantee the course of the country's international relations. The announcement was made by the following armed forces commanders: [Commander in Chief] Admiral Holdan Delgado Villamil, Army General Harold Bedoya Pizarro, Air Force General Hector Hernando Gil Nieto, and Navy Rear Admiral Roberto Serrano Avila.

The commanders made reference to the deteriorated relations with the U.S. Government and said they were confident that an adequate course will be found to overcome the problems that have arisen with this country. The Armed Forces commanders firmly believe that solutions will always be found to overcome the country's difficulties within a framework of a state of law, understanding, and prudence.

The high-level officers noted: Colombians should remain united to ensure the stability of our institutions and to strengthen our relations with the rest of the countries. In conclusion, the commanders emphasized that the country's relations with the United States help prevent unfavorable factors that could be used by the enemies of peace to hinder the tasks that the Colombian Government is currently undertaking.

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Ecuador

Ecuador: Bucaram Objects to U.S. 'Pressure' on Samper

PY1307023796 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0052 GMT 13 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Quito, 12 Jul (EFE) — Referring to the U.S. decision to withdraw the visa from Colombian President Ernesto Samper, Ecuadoran Vice President-elect Rosalia Arteaga asked that the self-determination of nations be respected.

Objecting to the U.S. Administration's action against Samper, Arteaga said: "The right of nations must always be respected. Each one has the right to decide on what happens within its own borders."

She added: "I am very respectful of the significance of each nation's identity. In the Colombian case, regardless of the objections to the manner in which he was elected president, the people must be respected, because it is the people's decision that is in play here."

Moreover, in Panama, Ecuadoran President-elect Abdala Bucaram rejected "the pressures" on any Latin American country, and expressed his "solidarity" with Samper, whom the United States accused of being linked to drug trafficking.

Samper "must be judged by Colombian laws, and if he made a mistake, this must be decided in his country. I want to extend my hand of solidarity of a Latin American brother to him, and although I respect the U.S. decision, I am hurt by this type of pressure," Bucaram said.

Bucaram and Arteaga will assume their respective posts on 10 August to succeed outgoing President Sixto Duran-Ballen, who has completed a four-year term as president of Ecuador.

Peru

Peru: Fujimori Says Rio Group Being Consulted on Samper Case

PY1307023196 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1939 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lima, 12 Jul (EFE) — President Alberto Fujimori said today that Peru promotes a joint declaration of the Rio Group in support of Colombia in view of the U.S. Government decision to cancel Colombian President Ernesto Samper's visa.

In comments to Radio Programas del Peru, Fujimori said that the Peruvian Foreign Ministry "is holding consultations" among the Rio Group foreign ministers to find out if it is possible to release a joint declaration.

Fujimori added that Peru "will not yet state its position on this case, which is worrying us."

Fujimori explained: "We will not state a position because we believe all the Latin American countries must act with the same criteria to face this kind of problem."

He added: "The consultation we are making is to see if this is possible. There are 11 countries and it will depend on the agreement reached at the level of Foreign Ministries.

Fujimori made these comments hours after the spokesmen of all the political forces represented in the Peruvian Congress condemned the U.S. action.

The spokesmen agreed that the cancellation of Samper's visa is "illegal," and that the decision represents Washington's "interference" in Colombian internal affairs.

Peru: More Drugs Found in Navy Vessel; Fujimori Views Issue

PY1307024496 Lima Radio Programas del Peru Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excpert] Personnel in charge of inspecting the SS Ilo, a Navy vessel on which more than 17 kg of cocaine hydrochloride were seized last week, found more bags of drugs hidden in the hold of the ship early this morning. In response to this, the Peruvian Navy issued an urgent communique that reads, quote: The Peruvian Navy informs the public that 1) the Peruvian Navy High Command is heartily cooperating with the appropriate authorities so that the official inquiry being held into the SS Ilo will get to the bottom of the issue involving the illegal peddling of drugs, which is damaging the state. 2) During the inspection of the aforementioned vessel, several packages were found hidden in a crevice of hold No. 4. These packages seemingly contain drugs, something which is being analyzed by the appropriate experts in the presence of representatives of the Department of the Public Prosecutor. The public will be duly informed about the result of this analysis. 3) The Peruvian Navy, as the main interested party, intends to completely elucidate this issue so that those responsible for this crime may receive an administrative sanction — which entails the cashiering of the guilty party as a disciplinary measure — without prejudice to the criminal sanctions to be meted out to the offenders. A thorough inspection will be made of other vessels and facilities in order to detect whether other similar crimes have been committed unquote.

In an exclusive interview with Radio Programas at 0540 local time today, Prosecutor General Blanca Nelida Colan confirmed that 25 packages containing cocaine

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hydrochloride were found at the SS Ilo. The total drug cargo weighed 26,461 kg. [passage omitted]

Some minutes ago, President Alberto Fujimori reported that the Navy has ordered an inspection of all Navy vessels. He said:

[Begin recording] The Armed Forces Command took the initiative to try to expose these criminal activities. A drug cargo was first found in the SS Ilo and subsequently another cargo of cocaine paste was found [in the same vessel] in the course of investigations. The Navy command has decided to inspect all Navy vessels and facilities without exception in search of a possible drug cargoes. This is a healthy measure. One should not take this as a negative decision, but rather as a Navy Command action geared to heading off a possible infiltration and consolidation of drug trafficking into our Armed Forces. [end recording]

Peru: Editorial on Equal Justice in Drug Cases, Others

PY1307024696 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 8 Jul 96 p A26

[Editorial: "Justice Is for All"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been very shameful for Peru that Canadian police have discovered bags of cocaine on a Peruvian Navy freight ship. And if that was not enough, two days later the Navy police discovered 17 kg more of cocaine in another similar ship, a fact reported to the Callao prosecutor's office. All Navy ships should have been checked immediately to see if we could find more drugs.

The only positive thing was that the Navy, instead of concealing the crime, has reported it to the regular court office. It would mean that the top command is no longer willing to allow this disorganization within its ranks. It is a step forward and we hope it will not follow the same course as another similar report: that released by the Peruvian Air Force when it discovered 174 kg of cocaine hydrochloride aboard one of its planes. What began — there too — with a clear accusation by the command, was rapidly turned into an order to close off all sources of information to the investigation. Today the judicial process is stalled and the only individuals under arrest are four noncommissioned officers; practically nothing is known about the events surrounding the discovery: which company or cartel supplied the drug, where was it going to be sold, or who is responsible, etc...

At the same time, however, the government reports the arrest of Mrs. Ana Kanashiro, former chief of Inabif [National Family Welfare Institute], for alleged misuse of an amount of money which is minimal compared to the foregoing cases.

As usual, justice in Peru is only for some and not for others. A few things are denounced, perhaps to conceal others. And this is regrettable, because the anti-corruption fight must be total, without exceptions or breaches.

The country is in a good position to begin its moral revolution. The country's economic administration has established the principle that the rules apply to all, so that there will be no exchange of perquisites or privileges. The judicial branch has begun an overall reform which undoubtedly will lead to more transparent and cleaner administration of justice. There is a battle with the Bar Association for the inclusion in its association's statute the possibility of dismissing violators. Within the National Police there is a command which has begun firm work against corruption, as we reported on 7 July. In this context, then, there can be no privileges or concealed cases kept securely under lock and key, much less when they involve institutions such as the Armed Forces, which are linked to national security. Corruption and drug trafficking must be eliminated once and for all. Justice and the law are for all, civilians, military, friends, or foes.

Peru: Daily Evaluates Effect of Bucaram Victory on Ties

PY1207235896 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 10 Jul 96 p 18

[Editorial: "Elections in Ecuador"]

[FBIS Translated Text] About 4.5 million Ecuadoran voters participated in the runoff elections to elect a new president for the next four years. The elections developed normally except for minor isolated incidents.

According to the partially adopted French method, the runoff elections were between the two candidates who came out first and second. They are both lawyers, rightist Jaime Nebot (49 years old) of the Social Christian Party, who won in the first round by a small margin, and populist Abdala Bucaram (44 years old) of the Ecuadoran Roldosist Party.

Nebot offered the Ecuadoran people a "pure and hard" neoliberal program, that became more moderate in the last month and a half of his campaign due to the threat of the preaching of his rival, because Bucaram turned the electoral campaign into a confrontation between the rich and the poor, making himself the leader of the poor.

The position of the candidates was very similar to the situation in Peru in 1990 with Mario Vargas Llosa

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winning the first round with a neoliberal program, and Alberto Fujimori coming out second with a populist program. The majority of the electors voted for Fujimori without knowing that he would change his electoral promise and end up doing what his rival promised, but without respecting democracy.

Just like it happened in Peru, the Ecuadoran electorate trusted Bucaram and not Nebot. Bucaram received 54.3 percent of the votes and Nebot 45.6 percent, an important difference of 9 percent, which is also a defeat for the pollsters that made Nebot the winner.

There seems to be no danger that Bucaram, once in the government, will go against the promises he made as a candidate, despite his unpredictable character and his picturesque past. The ex-mayor of Guayaquil won the presidency in his third try with a populist platform that could be labeled moderate left, centered on the fight against poverty (which affects 44 percent of the urban population and 75 percent of the rural population), and a promise for a better distribution of wealth, the recognition of the rights of the indigenous people, and that the private banks finance the country's production, which is a proposal that is worrying the financial sectors.

The president-elect has no majority in the unicameral Congress made up 82 deputies, of which 19 are from the Ecuadoran Roldosist Party and 27 from the PSC [Social Christian Party]. It is believed, however, that he will try to reach a political alliance with the center and leftist parties existing in Congress, which could give him a majority of up to 45 deputies. In any case, Bucaram will be forced to reach an agreement with the PSC if he wants to get the necessary two-thirds to get his constitutional reforms approved.

It is noteworthy that cities like Guayaquil, Quito, and Pichincha voted for Nebot, whose campaign centered on getting the vote of the middle class up and the urban population. These sectors, however, are a minority regarding the rest of the country, where Bucaram obtained a massive victory.

For the government, which was getting ready for Nebot's victory, because he is a candidate closer to the government due to his neoliberal program, Bucaram's victory creates a waiting period and many questions. Bucaram has multiplied his conciliatory messages and has asserted that the fluidity of bilateral relations is part of a state and not a government policy, thus indicating that there will be a continuity that he would like to achieve by confirming a doubtful Galo Leoro as foreign minister.

It should not be forgotten, however, that until only recently Bucaram said he advocated the theory of the "open wound" on the alleged border conflict Ecuador believes to have with our country. There are indications that his attitude has changed and that he now supports the negotiations but it should not be forgotten, however, that Vice President-elect Rosalia Arteaga advocates a harsh line on this delicate issue.

Only time will tell if Abdala Bucaram is the appropriate president to close a conflictive past and open the path to peace. For now, there are indications that he must calm down a stormy internal front. One should wish him success and wait for his inaugural address, which will occur in exactly one month.

Peru: Shining Path 'Ambassadors' Moves in Europe Outlined

PY1307031696 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 2 Jul 96 p A10

[FBIS Translated Text] Through its media and political contacts, Shining Path has launched a campaign against the Peruvian state — particularly the Armed Forces — in Europe with a view to predispose the international community in their favor and thus avoid the extradition of its "ambassadors" and top leaders following the EU accord on extradition.

According to sources close to intelligence services, the mud-slinging campaign is being orchestrated from London by Adolfo Olaechea Cahuas, founder of the so-called "Sol Peru Committee" and member of the International Revolutionary Movement (MRI), a criminal organization which groups together the most bloodthirsty groups in the world.

Olaechea, who has been disseminating pro-Shining Path propaganda through Internet for a year and a half, knows in advance what decision the governments of the EU members will make on the issue of subversive exiles in their countries. Olaechea obtained this information at the end of May from some of his contacts who have connections with the highest political circles in Britain.

In 1992, the terrorist leader managed to have Queen Elizabeth II order her private secretary, Robert Follower, to look into allegations made by Olaechea, who claimed that then Peruvian ambassador to Britain was harassing the members of the terrorist organization, which under the name "Support Group for Peru" was raising funds in the streets of London.

This time, Olaechea resorted to his contacts in the newspaper THE INDEPENDENT — which not long ago published a series of articles on the situation in Peru, which were suggestively entitled "Nothing Can Dampen Shining Path's Faith" — to get in touch with Amnesty International (AI).

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It is not known whether it was by coincidence or the upshot of these contacts, but the fact remains that AI published a report translated into several languages and entitled "Peru — Its Innocent Prisoners," in which AI intends to convince international public opinion about the fact that the repentant terrorists have been arbitrarily tried since they had no counsel for the defense and were sentenced to life imprisonment despite the fact that there was no incriminating evidence against the accused.

The instructions are described in detail by somebody calling himself Luis Paris in a report dated 3 June of this year, and allegedly written on a sheet of paper having an AI letterhead, which says: "The action AI is taking seeks to inform the Peruvian and international public about innocent people held captive in Peru and to bring pressure to bear on the Peruvian Government so that it will release all innocent prisoners at once and make counterterrorist laws conform to international law."

Fear of repatriation has driven Olaechea not only to spring quite a surprise on all AI groups in Europe but also to mobilize the [Shining Path] leaders who reside on the continent and work for organizations which are a mere front for their activities.

In Brussels — which hosts the so-called "Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Peru," "Committee for the Support of Peruvian People," and "Belgium's International Popular Relief" — Luis Arce Borja, editor in chief of EL DIARIO INTERNACIONAL is going to his counterparts' newspapers throughout Belgium to persuade them to launch a campaign in favor of the "Peruvian Communist Party's political refugees."

In Spain — where pro-Shining Path organizations like "Committee for the Support of the Peruvian Revolution," "Union of Marxist-Leninist Struggle," "Solidarity Committee," and "Cultural Front" are to be found — Jorge and Javier Mujica Contreras, Mila Zanabria, and Yolanda D. Rios, among other criminals, allegedly left Madrid and Segovia and are heading for towns located near the border with France.

There, the members of the so-called "Mariategui Intellectual Artistic Front" and the "French-Peruvian Committee Against Repression" and "Sol Peru II," whose stamping ground was the Arc de Triomphe district, were last seen at a Paris railway station.

Some terrorists, including Maximiliano Duran Araujo, alias "Ronald," and Angela M. Almeida, might have traveled to Belgium and Germany to coordinate other actions there.

In Sweden, members of the "Ayacucho-Peru Study Group," "4 November Peruvian Group," "Shining Path's Literary Circle of Ayacucho," and the so-called "Latin American Coordinating Board," controlled by Carlos La Torre Cordova, Delia Carrasco, Javier Zuquer, and the brothers Isolina, Juana, Pablo, and Roman La Torre Cordova, might have left Stockholm bound for some other places.

Meanwhile, some terrorists who live in Germany and manage the so-called "Amauta Study Group" in Berlin circulate freely passing themselves off as folk groups and traders in arts and crafts. Among the terrorists living in Berlin are Arturo Morote, Carlos Vega N., Benigno Z. Solorzano, alias "Julio," and Walter Lingan.

In London, Olaechea is seconded by Carlos Calderon Torrealba, Cesar Sotero Alejos, and a terrorist woman known as "Judy" Condor or "Marie."

Uruguay

Uruguay: Extraterritoriality of Helms-Burton Law Rejected

PY1207211696 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1942 GMT 12 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Montevideo, 12 Jul (EFE) — The Uruguayan Government today reaffirmed its rejection of the extraterritoriality concept the United States intends to impose on the Helms-Burton law, which is defended by Washington.

In a communique issued by the Foreign Ministry and handed over to EFE, the Uruguayan Government states that the "concept of extraterritoriality" of the law, which strengthens the economic blockade on Cuba, violates "the general principles of international law and foreign trade rules."

The Uruguayan Foreign Ministry released the communique, given the U.S. insistence on implementing a national law outside its territory, and recalls the consensual position "expressed and ratified unanimously by the Rio Group countries at the 15th regular foreign ministers' conference held in Cochabamba on 27 and 28 May 1996."

The Uruguayan Government reaction was prompted by "events which are well known," following the release in Washington of the opinion of U.S. Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor, who defended the U.S. right to impose the "Helms-Burton" law on Cuba, saying it is compatible with and does not contradict NAFTA. The Helms-Burton law has created conflict between the United States, Mexico, Canada, and the European Union.

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Venezuela

Venezuela: Minister Announces IMF Approved Standby Credit

PA1307050396 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 13 Jul 96

[Report by Zaida Pereira; from "The News" newscast; speakers identified by caption]

[FBIS Translated Text] The IMF has unanimously approved a standby [preceding word in English] credit for $1.4 billion to support the Venezuela Agenda plan.

Finance Minister Luis Raul Matos Azocar made the announcement via telephone a few minutes after the decision was made.

[Begin Matos Azocar recording] The first disbursements to support the Venezuela Agenda, totaling $500 million, will be made on 19 and 21 July. [end recording]

A technical mission will be arriving in our country in the next few days to evaluate the development of the Venezuela Agenda. The second disbursement will be in November, and the third at the beginning of next year.

Once the first phase of the macroeconomic measures is under way, the second phase of the Venezuela Agenda will be implemented to promote the takeoff of the productive sector, with support from international banks.

[Begin Rafael McQuae, coordinator of financial reforms from the Office of Coordination and Planning, recording] The international financial world is beginning to see Venezuela in a good way. That, I would say, is why this decision is so important. I would even say that we are no longer in a three-ball, two-strike count, that we are already on first base, it is the fourth batter's turn, the pitcher is tired, and we will see what happens next. I am sure we will hit a home run. [end recording]

As a reflection of the confidence that exists in the country, a business roundtable will take place next Tuesday, in which 280 representatives from 140 enterprises interested in investing in Venezuela will participate.

Venezuela: U.S. Military Forces Arrive for Laser Strike

PA1207151096 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 10 Jul 96 p D-6

[Report by Javier Ignacio Mayorca]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. military forces have begun arriving in Andean countries and Brazil to participate in the so-called Operation "Laser Strike."

U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry announced this plan in April. The origin of the name "Laser Strike" has not been explained yet, but its basic objective is to cut off air routes for drug trafficking.

The head of the Pentagon said it was a "military, multinational, hemispheric operation." Sources at the Conacuid [National Commission Against Illicit Drug Use] have said the characteristics of "Laser Strike" were explained by General Barry McCaffrey, former U.S. Southern Command chief, to former Defense Minister Major General Moises Orozco Graterol.

The Venezuelan officer supposedly agreed with the general principles of the plan, but he expressed his opposition to allow foreign, military forces to persecute "narco-planes" in Venezuelan skies. Official spokespersons from Colombia and Venezuela have expressed similar opposition.

Meanwhile, international news agencies insist this operation is being carried out in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, and Venezuela. They also have stated that at least 20 aircraft have already been confronted in what has been called "air interdiction."

The Bolivian press has reported the arrival of 28 soldiers, most of whom are retired, in Cochabamba claiming to be members of a contingent of volunteers wishing to educate others on "salvage, search, and rescue." They have denied that their presence is related to "Laser Strike."

Agreement With Cuba

Meanwhile, Guillermo Romero Lizarraga, president of Conacuid, is in Havana (Cuba) studying proposals for joint actions to fight the trafficking and consumption of drugs.

Romero Lizarraga has briefed the Cuban Government on the first epidemiological study done in our country on drug trafficking. The results of this survey, he added, will be known in the next three months.

Participants agreed in this meeting to begin a permanent exchange of information between the Conacuid Documentation Center and the Cuban Secretariat of the National Drug Committee.

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